The Encyclopedia of Religion

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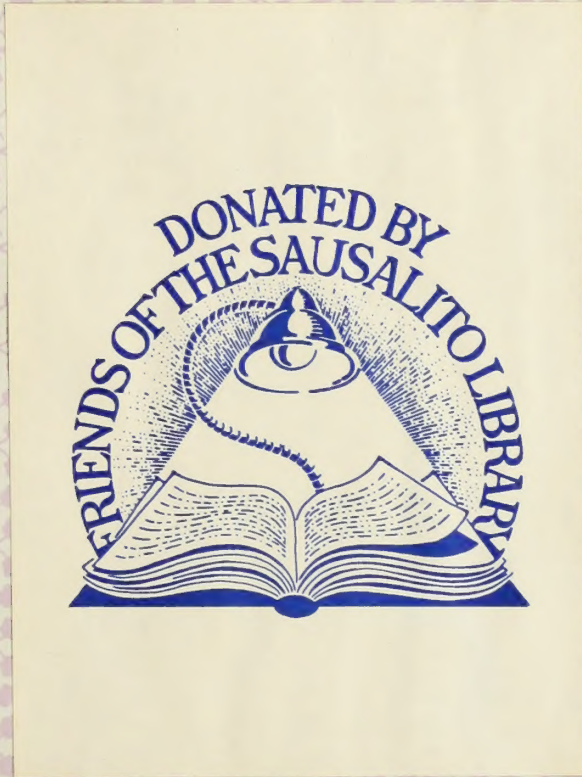
Mircea Eliade

EDITOR IN CHIEF

Volume 1

On the completion of *The Encyclopedia of Religion*,
the board of editors and the staff pay homage to
the memory of Victor Turner and Mircea Eliade,
deceased in 1983 and 1986, respectively.

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Preface

Such an encyclopedia as this has long been overdue. In all areas of religious studies—in the historical religious traditions as well as in nonliterate ("primitive") religious systems—the "information explosion" of recent decades has demanded a new presentation of available materials. Further, in the last half century, new methodological approaches and more adequate hermeneutics have enhanced our knowledge of the existential value, the social function, and the cultural creativity of religions throughout history. We understand better now the mind and the behavior of *homo religiosus* ("religious man"), and we know much more about the beginnings, the growth, and the crises of different religions of the world.

These impressive advances in information and understanding have helped to eradicate the clichés, highly popular in the nineteenth century, concerning the mental capacity of nonliterate peoples and the poverty and provincialism of non-Western cultures. To realize the radical change of perspective, it suffices to compare, for instance, the current interpretations of an Australian Aboriginal ritual, a traditional African mythology, an Inner Asian shamanistic séance, or such complex phenomena as yoga and alchemy with the evaluations *en vogue* a few generations ago. Perhaps for the first time in history we recognize today not only the unity of human races but also the spiritual values and cultural significance of their religious creations.

I shall not here attempt to survey all the decisive contributions of recent research to a more correct appreciation of the dialectics of the sacred and of so many ethnic and historical religious systems. A few examples will serve to underscore my point.

In some areas of religious studies, unexpected and astonishing consequences of recent archaeological or textual discoveries have become almost immediately apparent. Excavations at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, for instance, have revealed the grandiose proto-historical urban civilization of the Indus Valley, and discoveries of the library of gnostic writings at Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt and of a great number of Essene manuscripts at Qumran, near the Dead Sea, have given us documents of immeasurable value. Although publication and translation are not yet completed, much light has already been thrown on two problems that were extremely controversial until a generation ago.

A specific characteristic of the last several decades' activities has been the amazing number of Asian religious texts that have been edited and, in many cases, translated for the first time into a European language. This editorial enterprise has been accompanied by the publication of a series of monographs spanning a range of scholarship difficult to imagine a few generations ago. The significance of such works is enormous, and the consequences of their publication are far-reaching.

The esoteric and occult traditions, misunderstood or neglected by former generations of scholars born and brought up in a positivistic milieu, constitute but one area of study on which recent research has cast new light. Here, much that was once obscure has been illuminated by, for instance, the classic monographs of Gershom Scholem on Qabbalah and on Jewish gnostic and mystical systems. Scholem's erudition and insight have disclosed to us a coherent and profound world of meaning in texts that had earlier been generally dismissed as mere magic and superstition. Likewise, our understanding of Islamic mysticism has been radically improved by Louis Massignon's works, while Henry Corbin and his disciples have revealed the neglected dimensions of Ismāʿīlī esoteric tradition.

Also, in the past forty years we have witnessed a more correct and comprehensive appraisal of Chinese, Indian, and Western alchemies. Until recently, alchemy was regarded either as a proto-chemistry—that is, as an embryonic, naive, or prescientific discipline—or as a mass of superstitious rubbish that was culturally irrelevant. The investigations of Joseph Needham and Nathan Sivin have proved that Chinese alchemy has a holistic

x   PREFACE

structure, that it is a traditional science *sui generis*, not intelligible without its cosmologies and its ethical and, so to say, "existential" presuppositions and soteriological implications. And it is significant that in China alchemy was intimately related to secret Taoist practices, that in India it was a part of Tantric Yoga, and that, in the West, Greco-Egyptian and Renaissance alchemy was usually connected with gnosticism and Hermetism—all of which are secret, "occult" traditions.

A most surprising result of contemporary scholarship has been the discovery of the important role that alchemy and Hermetic esotericism have played in Western thought, not only in the Italian Renaissance but also in the triumph of Copernicus's new astronomy, in the heliocentric theory of the solar system. Frances A. Yates has brilliantly analyzed the deep implications of the passionate interest in Hermetism in this period. For almost two centuries, Egyptian magic, alchemy, and esotericism have obsessed innumerable theologians and philosophers, believers as well as skeptics and crypto-atheists. Yet, only recently has the importance of alchemy in Newton's thinking, for example, been revealed. Betty J. T. Dobbs has pointed out that Newton probed in his laboratory "the whole vast literature of the older alchemy as it has never been probed before or since." In fact, Newton sought in alchemy the structure of the small world to match his cosmological system.

Among many other examples of the progress realized in the last several decades, I may also recall the reevaluation of European popular traditions. Until the 1930s, the religious systems of Australian Aborigines and North American Indians were more seriously investigated, and were better understood, than were European folk traditions. On the one hand, researchers were interested mainly in folk literature; on the other hand, their interpretations of rituals and "popular mythologies" usually followed one of the fashionable theorists, such as Wilhelm Mannhardt or James G. Frazer. Furthermore, many scholars, in both eastern and western Europe, considered rural traditions as fragmentary and debased survivals from a superior layer of culture, from that, say, represented by the feudal aristocracy or that derived from church literature. In sum, taking into account the powerful influences of the church and of urban culture, one was inclined to doubt the authenticity or the archaism of rural religious traditions in Europe.

Recent and more rigorous studies have revealed a quite different situation. The Austrian ethnologist Leopold Schmidt, for example, has shown that certain mythico-ritual scenarios that were still current among peasants of central and southeastern Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century preserved mythologi-

cal fragments and rituals that had disappeared in ancient Greece before the time of Homer. Other scholars have concluded that Romanian and Balkan folklore preserves Homeric and pre-Homeric themes and motifs. According to the American linguist and anthropologist Paul Friedrich, "The attitudes of contemporary Greek peasants toward the Virgin Mary might bear in some way on our understanding of the Classical Demeter." And the archaeologist Marija Gimbutas has pointed out that the pre-Christian layer in Baltic folklore "is so ancient that it undoubtedly reaches back to prehistoric times—at least to the Iron Age or in the case of some elements even several millennia deeper." As to the archaism of Irish popular traditions, recent studies have demonstrated numerous analogies with ancient Indian ideas and customs.

Even more important, popular traditions around the globe reveal a specific originality in their reinterpretation of the Christian message. In many cultures, peasants practice what can be called a "cosmic Christianity," which, in a "total" history of Christendom, ought to have a place, for it represents a new type of religious creativity. Thus, parallel to the different Christian theologies constructed both on Hebrew scriptures and on Greek metaphysics, one must also set the "popular theology" that assimilated and christianized many archaic traditions, from Neolithic to Oriental and Hellenistic religions. In this way, the religious history of Christian Europe will be deprovincialized and its universal values will become more evident.

I may also recall some of the results of contemporary work on the religious meaning—or function—of oral, and even written, literature. Some years ago, a number of scholars pointed out the initiatory symbols and motifs of certain categories of fairy tale. Significantly, almost at the same time many critics in Europe as well as in the United States began to investigate the patterns of initiation recognizable in various literary works. In both types of narrative, oral and written, we are led into an imaginary world, and in both we meet characters who undergo a series of initiatory ordeals, a common plot structure that is generally presented more or less transparently. The difference is that, while some fairy tales can be regarded as reflecting the remembrance of actual initiation rites practiced in the past, such is not true of modern literary works.

Specialists have also identified initiatory elements in such classical sources as the sixth book of Vergil's *Aeneid*, in a number of scenarios and personages of the Arthurian legends, in the neo-Greek epic *Digenis Akritas*, in Tibetan epic poetry, and elsewhere. Most probably, these elements are ghostly souvenirs of the distant

past, memories, vaguely recalled, of ancient initiatory rituals. But such cannot be so with initiatory structures found in modern literature from Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and Eliot's *The Waste Land* to the many novels of James Fenimore Cooper, Jules Verne, Mark Twain, and William Faulkner. Nevertheless, these facts are relevant for an understanding of modern Western man. Indeed, in a desacralized world such as ours, the "sacred" is present and active chiefly in imaginary universes. But imaginary experiences are part of the total human being. This means that nostalgia for initiatory trials and scenarios, nostalgia deciphered in so many literary and artistic works (including the cinema), reveals modern man's longing for a *renovatio* capable of radically changing his existence.

Of course, this is only an example of the unconscious reaction against the desacralization of modern Western societies, in some regards a phenomenon parallel to the acculturation of many traditional ("primitive") cultures. This complex and delicate problem warrants far more attention then I can give it here, but I do wish to note that what has been called the "occult explosion" in contemporary North America belongs to the same desperate effort to react against the growing desacralization of the modern world, specifically the almost general crisis of the Christian churches.

The most significant advance in religious studies of the past several decades has been realized in our understanding of primal religions—that is, the religious systems of "primitive," nonliterate peoples. There is no doubt that improvement of fieldwork methods and the growing interest of anthropologists in depth psychology, linguistics, and historiographical methodology have contributed to this success. Especially the researches, hypotheses, and controversies in relation to myths and mythological thinking have played a decisive role. The once-popular theories of the intellectual inferiority of "savages," or of their "pre-logical mentality," have been obsolete for some time. Anthropologists and sociologists as well as historians of religions nowadays emphasize the structural coherence of "primitive" religious beliefs and ideas. Although, as is always true in humanistic disciplines, no general theory on the "primitive mind" has been universally accepted, one methodological presupposition seems to be shared by the majority of today's scholars: namely, the "normality" and, consequently, the creativity of the primal religions.

Indeed, it has been repeatedly pointed out that the archaic mind has never been stagnant, that some nonliterate peoples have made important technological discoveries and that some others have had a certain sense

of history. Such radical modification of our former understanding and evaluation of nonliterate religious traditions has been in part a consequence of growing interest in the structure and the morphology of the sacred—that is, in religious experience and in its ritual and symbolic expressions.

Progressively, scholars have realized the necessity of trying to discover the meanings given by nonliterate peoples to their own religious activities. W. E. H. Stanner, who dedicated his life to the study of Australian Aborigines, emphatically asserted that their religion must be approached "*as* religion and not as a mirror of something else." Stanner repeatedly criticized the fallacious presupposition "that the social order is primary and in some cases causal, and the religious order secondary and in some sense consequential." Equally significant is the affirmation of the British Africanist E. E. Evans-Pritchard that knowledge of Christian theology, exegesis, symbolic thought, and ritual better enables the anthropologist to understand "primitive" ideas and practices.

An obvious corollary may thence be drawn: that knowledge of the religious ideas and practices of other traditions better enables anyone to understand his or her own. The history of religions is the story of the human encounter with the sacred—a universal phenomenon made evident in myriad ways.

These, then, are some of the themes and topics that the interested reader will find in the hundreds of articles that constitute this encyclopedia. In planning it, the editors and the staff have aimed at a concise, clear, and objective description of the totality of human experiences of the sacred. We have, we hope, paid due attention to traditions both great and small, to the historical religions as well as to the primal religions, to the religious systems of the East as well as to those of the West. Wishing particularly to avoid reductionism and Western cultural bias, we have given far greater space to the religions of non-Western areas than have earlier reference books on religion. Finally, and in conformity with the international design of our encyclopedia, we have invited scholars from five continents to contribute articles related to their specific areas of research.

Our encyclopedia was not conceived as a dictionary, with entries covering the entire vocabulary in every field of religious studies. Rather, it was conceived as a system of articles on important ideas, beliefs, rituals, myths, symbols, and persons that have played a role in the universal history of religions from Paleolithic times to the present day. Thus, the reader will not find here entries on all the popes or on all the patriarchs of the Eastern churches, nor on all the saints, mystics, and mi-

xii   PREFACE

nor figures of the various religious traditions. Instead, here is a great network of historical and descriptive articles, synthetical discussions, and interpretive essays that make available contemporary insight into the long and multifaceted history of religious man.

Here, among many others, are articles devoted to recent archaeological and textual discoveries and, particularly important, articles devoted to the reevaluation of facts and systems of thought ignored or neglected until a few decades ago: for instance, the history of Hermetism and of alchemy, the occult revival in our time, the creativity of "popular" religions, the millenaristic movements among contemporary "primitive" societies, and the religious dimensions of the arts. A more rigorous study of such themes not only illuminates their meanings but, in some cases, opens new perspectives on the evaluation of other cultural phenomena.

By consulting various entries in the encyclopedia, the reader will learn the latest results of anthropological research and the current evaluation of various primal religions. These, in turn, have led to the burgeoning contemporary interest in the structure, meaning, and functions of myth and of religious symbols. A number of articles herein are devoted to these subjects, which are equally important, I might add, for recent Western

philosophical inquiry. As a matter of fact, the exegesis of mythical thinking has played a central role in the works of many distinguished modern philosophers and linguists. Similarly, a more adequate understanding of symbolic thinking has contributed to the systematic study of religious symbols, and, thus, to a reevaluation of the central role of religious symbolism.

I need not list here other examples of recent methodological progress that has made possible our present comprehension of religious structures and creations. It suffices to say that the researches of the last half century concern not only the historian of religions, the anthropologist, and the sociologist but also the political scientist, the social historian, the psychologist, and the philosopher. To know the great variety of worldviews assumed by religious man, to comprehend the expanse of his spiritual universe, is, finally, to advance our general knowledge of humankind. It is true that most of the worldviews of primal societies and archaic civilizations have long since been left behind by history. But they have not vanished without a trace. They have contributed toward making us what we are today, and so, after all, they are part of our own history.

MIRCEA ELIADE
Chicago, March 1986

Foreword

Mircea Eliade, the editor in chief of this encyclopedia, died in April 1986, shortly after drafting his preface. The publisher wisely chose to leave his preface substantially as he had composed it, and it was suggested that I spell out in a foreword what might be called the encyclopedia's "angle of vision," to supplement what had already been said by its editor in chief.

Needless to say, it would be virtually impossible for an encyclopedia of this sort to cover adequately every religious idea, practice, and phenomenon known to the human race. At the same time, the publisher, the editors, and our many advisers wished to produce not a dictionary but a genuine encyclopedia that would introduce educated, nonspecialist readers to important ideas, practices, and persons in the religious experience of humankind from the Paleolithic past to our day.

The present work has much in common with another major English-language encyclopedia produced earlier in this century, namely, the thirteen-volume *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hastings with assistance from John A. Selbie, Louis H. Gray, and others (Edinburgh, 1908–1926; reprint, New York, 1955; hereafter designated *ERE*). Both came into being at times when knowledge about the various religions had grown to such a degree that without an encyclopedic work of some sort, it would not be possible, as the architects of the *ERE* put it, "to have at our command the vast stores of learning which have accumulated."

The planners of both encyclopedias attempted to solicit contributions from the most advanced scholars at work in the various fields of study; they asked their contributors for the most up-to-date information available, to be sure, but also for histories of interpretation and the most current interpretive schemas. That much of what was said in the *ERE* has now gone out of date and that all of it reflects the scholarship of the time in which it was produced are melancholy reminders that any encyclopedia, including this one, begins to grow obsolete almost before it is published.

Readers will notice, of course, some basic differences between these two encyclopedias. Joachim Wach (1898–1955) often reminded us that religion usually has three "expressions" (his term) or dimensions, namely, the theoretical (e.g., doctrines, dogmas, myths, theologies, ethics), the practical (e.g., cults, sacraments, meditations), and the sociological (e.g., religious groupings, ecclesiastical forms). Our encyclopedia tries to do justice as much as possible to these three dimensions of religion, in contradistinction to the *ERE*, which focused primarily on the theoretical aspect to the exclusion of the practical and the sociological. Admittedly, the division of human experience into various compartments—religion, philosophy, ethics, art, and so on—is largely a Western convention; and historically, in the West, theology (cognitive attempts to systematize religious teachings) has occupied a conspicuously important place in defining religion, which in turn has enjoyed a traditionally ambiguous but close relationship with ethics and the philosophy of religion. Thus it is not surprising that the *ERE* was primarily concerned with theologies and philosophies of religion and with ethics, for it was the underlying theological and philosophical interest of the planners of the *ERE* that led them to look for normativeness in religion and ethics. In this sense, the *ERE* and the present encyclopedia are very different.

It is important to appreciate the difference between the mental world of the planners of the *ERE* and our own mental world. Unconsciously if not consciously, the planners of the *ERE* viewed non-Western peoples, histories, cultures, and religions primarily from the Western perspective. It was doubtless true that politically, socially, culturally, religiously, economically, and militarily the power of Western colonial nations reached its zenith during the nineteenth century, and that the most important events of the modern world occurred through the impetus and initiative of the West. Moreover, as has been aptly remarked, the ethos of the nineteenth century lasted rather longer than the actual

calendar end of the century; and furthermore, although World War I undeniably weakened the unity and cohesiveness of the European family of nations, a persistent carryover of the vitality of the Western powers, Western civilization, and Western learning remained ·even in Asia and Africa until the end of World War II.

To many non-Western peoples, the year 1945 marked a significant line of demarcation between two worlds of experience. In their eyes, the Western colonial powers—even when they meant well—had acted in the manner of parents who refuse to allow their children to grow up by making all the important decisions for them. The years after World War II witnessed not only the emergence of many new and inexperienced nations but, more important, a redefinition on a global scale of the dignity, value, and freedom of human beings, including non-Western peoples. While knowledgeable Western scholars of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw non-Western peoples only as sources of religious and cultural data for Western scholars to analyze within their own (i.e., Western) methodologies and frameworks, after World War II these same non-Western peoples rightly began to insist on participating in the global effort to develop adequate interpretive schemes for apprehending the entire religious experience of humankind, past and present, prehistoric to modern. Accordingly, the present encyclopedia has attempted to enlarge the mental world of contemporary scholarship by drawing a large number of contributors from the non-Western world. This has turned out to be a far more difficult approach—but a far more rewarding one—than a primarily Western-based compendium modeled on the *ERE* would have been.

During the early twentieth century, three major areas of "scholarly" or "scientific" study of religion(s)—often called "comparative religion" or the "comparative study of religions"—were taken for granted. The first comprised a narrow historical and ethnological survey of a short series of particular religions, conceived as the simple collection of "raw" religious data—beliefs, practices, feelings, moods, attitudes—often colored by an evolutionary ideology. Scholars were keenly aware, however, of the personal and corporate aspects and the immanental and transcendental dimensions of religions. The second area aimed to classify religious data according to what Stanley A. Cook in the *ERE* called "certain persistent and prevalent notions of the 'evolution' of thought and . . . practices . . . in the history of culture" (*ERE*, vol. 10, p. 664). The third area was usually reserved for the philosophy of religion or sometimes for theology. In all three areas, scholars were conscious of the virtues of the comparative method of inquiry—"the unbiased co-ordination of all comparable

data irrespective of context or age"—which aims to break down "racial, social, intellectual, and psychical boundaries, and to bring into relation ·all classes and races of men" (ibid.). They were careful to point out, however, that "similar practices can have different meanings or motives, and similar ideas and beliefs can be differently expressed . . . [so that] confusion has often been caused by naive comparisons and rash inferences" (ibid.). A rational scheme of interpretation of religious ideas, usually a philosophy of religion although sometimes a theology, was brought in to introduce order and to adjudicate nebulous, confusing, and competing religious claims. The following statement succinctly expresses the main concern of the *ERE:*

> Whenever the ethical or moral value of activities or conditions is questioned, the value of religion is involved; and all deep-stirring experiences invariably compel a reconsideration of the most fundamental ideas, whether they are explicitly religious or not. Ultimately there arise problems of justice, human destiny, God, and the universe; and these in turn involve problems of the relation between 'religious' and other ideas, the validity of ordinary knowledge, and practicable conceptions of 'experience' and 'reality.' (ibid., p. 662)

Undeniably the *ERE* was an important embodiment of the deep concerns of informed Western theologians and philosophers with religion and ethics in the early twentieth century, and it represented a high standard, with contributions from many of the most erudite scholars of comparative religion at the time.

Clearly, our encyclopedia of religion is the product of a different time and a different sort of scholarship. The multidimensional scholarly style of Mircea Eliade, our editor in chief, might best exemplify the character of our encyclopedia. Born in Romania, Eliade early aspired to be a physical scientist but was lured into the study of the philosophy of the Italian Renaissance during his college days. He studied Indian philosophy and Yoga at the University of Calcutta and in the Himalayas. Once back in Romania, he taught at the University of Bucharest and also established his reputation as a creative writer. After serving as a cultural attaché in both London and Lisbon, he taught and wrote in Paris as a self-styled refugee. In 1956 he was invited to teach at the University of Chicago, and there he spent the next thirty years, until his death in 1986. While he taught the history of religions in the Divinity School and in the Committee of Social Thought, he also collaborated often with philosopher Paul Ricoeur and theologian Paul Tillich. His numerous writings include systematic works; historical studies; monographs on yoga, shamanism, folk religion, and alchemy; autobiographies; drama; stories of the occult; and novels.

xv

Eliade hoped that the present encyclopedia would implement his lifelong vision of a "total hermeneutics," a coherent interpretive framework for the entire human experience (called once by Wach "integral understanding"). Eliade's total hermeneutics was based on his understanding of the general scientific study of religions (*allgemeine Religionswissenschaft*), known as the "history of religions" to the international association of scholars of the discipline, and was dependent as well on various social, physical, and biological sciences; law; humanistic disciplines, especially the arts and literature; philosophy (more particularly the philosophy of religion); and theologies. It was Eliade's conviction that all of these disciplines in combination must attempt to decipher the meaning of human experience in this mysterious universe. Indeed, from the dawn of history, human beings have been working, discovering, and religious beings simultaneously.

The editors agreed with Eliade that the basic methodology underlying our encyclopedia should be that of the history of religions (*Religionswissenschaft*), which consists of two dimensions, historical and systematic. In this framework, the historical dimension depends upon a mutual interaction between histories of individual religions—any of the prehistoric, early historic, historic, premodern, modern, or contemporary "primitive" religions—and the history of *religion*—myths, symbols, rituals, and so on. The systematic task consists of phenomenological, comparative, sociological, and psychological studies of religions. (Eliade's particular contribution here has been termed the "morphological" study of religion.)

Eliade and the editors were convinced that with the combination of the history of religions and all the other disciplines mentioned previously it would be possible to arrive at certain disciplined generalizations about the nature of religion, as well as a structuring of religious data, which would increase our understanding of the meaning of human experience or the mode of being human in this universe. Accordingly, in the early planning stage, at least, we created three categories of articles. Our first broad category was planned to include historical and descriptive essays on particular religious communities and traditions, both the "great" traditions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam) and the "small" (traditional African societies, Australian Aboriginal groups, Mesoamerican cultures, and others). Our second broad category was slated to cover topics in the history of religion (e.g., "afterlife," "alchemy," "myth," "ritual," "symbol," and so on). Finally, our third broad category was planned to include examinations of the relationships between religion and other areas of culture (e.g., law, science, the arts, and others).

Inevitably, there were bound to be duplications among topics in different categories, as in the case of "ritual," "ritual studies," and the rituals of individual religious traditions. There are also, we found, some religious phenomena that defy easy categorization. Thus, our three categories were merely the framework on which we based our plans; we expanded and embellished it as need arose.

In editing an encyclopedia on "religion," we have had to face many problems that editors of encyclopedias on other subjects might easily avoid. One such problem involves what H. Richard Niebuhr called the "inner" and the "outer" meanings of religious phenomena. Wilfred Cantwell Smith once remarked that to outsiders Islam is a religion of the Muslims but to the Muslims Islam is a religion of truth. Our encyclopedia has made a serious effort on this account to balance the inner, theological, soteriological meanings and the outer, historical, sociological, anthropological, historical, and cultural meanings; but it is doubtful that our efforts will completely satisfy those partisans who seek only the "inner" or the "outer" meanings of religious phenomena. There are surely some people who think that their religious tradition alone encompasses the whole and final truth. It is beyond the scope of our encyclopedia to address this issue.

Readers should, however, know what our stance toward religion(s) is. We have assumed that there is no such thing as a purely religious phenomenon. A religious phenomenon is a human phenomenon and thus is not only religious but also social, cultural, psychological, biological, and so on. Yet as Eliade rightly said, "To try to grasp the essence of such a phenomenon by means of physiology, psychology, sociology, economics, linguistics, art or any other study is false; it misses the one unique and irreducible element in it—the element of the sacred" (*Patterns in Comparative Religion*, London, 1958, p. xi). Thus, throughout this encyclopedia we have made every effort to avoid "reductionist" interpretations of religion.

By the same token, we have avoided the currently fashionable theory of dividing history into a simplistic formula of tradition versus modern. We recall that from the time of the Enlightenment in Europe many scholars sought the "origin" of religion in order to understand the meaning of religions. In their inquiry, they paid scant attention to the historical dimensions of religions because to them, history signified primarily the accretions of time and the process of degeneration, presumably from the origin of religion. On the other hand, many scholars today are preoccupied with the contemporary manifestations of religions without adequate appreciation of the historical processes that impinge on

the present. They often equate the traditional with an inherited culture long identified with a stagnating society, and thus to them what is not modern has the derogatory connotation of tradition. It is our intention, therefore, to avoid both such a facile use of history and the formula of tradition versus modern.

Our editor in chief sincerely appreciated the dedication of the editors and the staff members who, over the years, created entries; wrote up descriptions for articles; solicited consultants, advisers, and contributors; read the submitted articles; made suggestions for revisions; and much more. Among the editors, Charles J. Adams and Annemarie Schimmel made important contributions in the history of religion in addition to their original assignment in the histories of religions, Islam. Martin E. Marty, Richard P. McBrien, and Robert M. Seltzer handled not only their original assignments of Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism, respectively, but were also indispensable in formulating theories and frameworks. Seltzer's assignment also included Israelite religion as well as other religions of the ancient Near East. Jacob Needleman undertook the formidable task of relating religion to other areas of life. Eliade himself not only functioned as our editor in chief but also acted as a supervising editor for archaic, primal religions (with Victor Turner and Lawrence E. Sullivan, our associate editor) and for Hinduism (helped by William K. Mahony, our assistant editor). Turner, of course, covered the vast area of anthropology, folklores, and folk religions; and I, besides collaborating on the history of religion, was in charge of Chinese, Korean, and Japanese religions and of Buddhism. Sullivan worked with Eliade on the history of religion and with Turner on primal religions; Mahoney worked with Eliade on Hinduism and with me on Buddhism. All of us enjoyed the help of the project editors on the Macmillan staff.

We all witnessed Eliade's deep grief at the news of Victor Turner's death in 1983. Turner had at one time chaired the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago, a committee on which Eliade served for many years. In him were combined abundant energy and multidimensional interests and a broad learning, all of which he freely offered to the encyclopedia. His death was a great blow to us all.

Eliade wished to acknowledge publicly all the formal and informal consultants, advisers, and contributors, many of whom were friends, colleagues, and former students of the editors. This is an appropriate place to express our gratitude to Franklin I. Gamwell, dean of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, and to Bernard McGinn, program coordinator of the Institute for the Advanced Study of Religion in the Divinity School, for providing facilities for editorial meetings of the encyclopedia. We also wish to thank Wendy D. O'Flaherty (on the study of Hinduism especially), other Chicago colleagues, and Gregory D. Alles and Peter Chemery, who served as Eliade's research assistants, for generously offering their scholarship, their time, and their labor.

All of the editors share Eliade's sentiment, often expressed at various meetings, in recognizing the initiative of Jeremiah Kaplan, president of Macmillan Publishing Company, and of Charles E. Smith, vice-president and publisher, for undertaking this gigantic and expensive enterprise, and the efficiency and effectiveness of the project editors on the publisher's staff in bringing this undertaking to a successful conclusion.

Of course, everyone involved in the realization of *The Encyclopedia of Religion*—editors, consultants, contributors, and staff—laments the untimely death of Mircea Eliade. But we should recall the epitaph of Sir Christopher Wren at Saint Paul's in London: "If you seek his monument, look around you." In like vein, we can say about Mircea Eliade, who passed away before his encyclopedia came to full fruition, "If you seek his monument, look in these volumes." This encyclopedia was his final undertaking, and he will remain alive in the minds of its readers for decades to come.

I consider it a great privilege to have known and worked with Mircea Eliade for more than three decades. I wish to express my personal gratitude to the Macmillan staff, to fellow advisers, and to the contributors who made this encyclopedia possible. Although the foregoing statement is largely mine, I hope that it expresses as well something of the sentiments of my colleagues on the board of editors.

JOSEPH M. KITAGAWA
Chicago, August 1986

Introduction

During the early days of the development of this encyclopedia, the board of editors and the senior members of the staff met often, both formally and informally, to exchange ideas, to decide editorial policies, and to discuss plans for the contents of the work we had undertaken to produce. At first, given the enormous scope of our topic, and the great variety of religious traditions and fields of study that it includes, it seemed impossible that any coherent system of articles could be devised that would limn the entire circle of current learning on religion and that would, further, serve the purposes both of the general reader and of specialists in various areas of religious studies. Soon, however, it became apparent that the conceptual scheme mapped out by Mircea Eliade, our editor in chief, and the editorial formats and systems used by Macmillan were extremely compatible. Indeed, quite early in our planning stage, we realized the possibilities of creating a work that would be both truly encyclopedic and widely useful. At the conclusion of the editorial meeting in which we had reached this happy consensus, Victor Turner remarked, with evident delight, "And so, then, we shall let a thousand flowers bloom."

As usual, Turner's metaphor was apt. Not only did his horticultural image echo Eliade's particular interest in vegetative symbolism—from the Goethean notion of the primordial plant to the widespread image of the cosmic tree—but it suggested a correspondence between editing and gardening that I have long known to be true.

The editor and the gardener do, in fact, have much in common. The one, just as the other, must know taxonomy, and he must plan his garden with care. He must consider the genera and species of vegetal materials he wishes to include, the size and shape of his plot, the number and arrangement of plants, their growing season and their heights and textures and colors. Then the soil must be prepared, stones removed, seeds sown and nourished. After a while, germination occurs and plants emerge. With an eye toward the planned appearance of the garden at maturity, individual plants must be tended and encouraged to grow; some must be pinched back to improve their shape, propped up to permit their development, or given extra nutriments to build their strength. Attention must constantly be paid, and the garden must be rid of noxious weeds and pernicious pests. This all done, and given favorable atmospheric conditions, a garden may grow and flourish.

The end result may be much as the gardener had planned, forming the orderly patterns of the original design and exhibiting the structural symmetries, pleasing contrasts, and pretty juxtapositions that the gardener had first imagined. But there will surely be some surprises along the way. Some seeds may fail to sprout; others may yield proliferous growth. A natural balance seems to obtain. Just as a few seedlings may be undersized, weak, and thin, some few early blossoms of disappointingly pallid hue, other plants may foliate and flower with unexpected vigor and splendor. For all a gardener's careful planning, a garden grows as it will.

Yet, if the conceptual scheme of a garden has been judiciously and imaginatively wrought and if the gardener works with skill and patience and knowledge of the needs of the various plants, the garden may, in the end, be a wondrous thing. A thousand flowers may indeed one day bloom, to enchant the eye, engage the mind, and enrich the spirit.

The present encyclopedia is a garden of nearly three thousand flowers, grown from seeds sown in scholarly fields around the globe and transplanted here to form this great collection of articles. The board of editors and the Macmillan staff have gladly labored in this large and elaborate plot during the seven years of its planning and cultivation, sharing our chores with uncommon congeniality and good will. Now that the season of bloom is upon us, it falls to me, as the senior project editor on the Macmillan staff, to recapitulate some of

the editorial policies we established, some of the editorial decisions we made, and some of the editorial practices we followed in making our garden grow.

To cover the vast territory outlined by our editor in chief in his general plan for the encyclopedia, the editors undertook to develop specific plans for articles in their various areas of specialization. Governed only by a general word allotment and suggestions for certain patterns of coverage, each editor was given free rein to determine the number, kind, and length of articles for the area(s) assigned to him or her. Staff members assigned to corresponding areas coordinated and supplemented the editors' plans for coverage but did not substantially alter them. Some parts of our plans were assigned to project editors on the Macmillan staff and were developed by them on the expert advice of special consultants. Consequently, in the final conceptual scheme of things, selection and arrangement of materials on the various religious traditions and fields of study turned out to be generally similar but particularly diverse, reflecting not only the different states of current scholarship in different fields but also the personal judgments and emphases of the various supervising editors.

Entries in the encyclopedia, it was early decided, would be alphabetically arranged. To avoid the dilemma of "alphabetization versus systematization," however, we also planned to follow the admirable practice of earlier Macmillan encyclopedias in using "composite entries" to group two or more articles under one heading, thus permitting systematic discussion of various aspects of broad topics. As an aid to the reader, we planned to put a headnote to each composite entry to explain its organization and, where appropriate, to offer a rationale for its partition. In developing composite entries, I should note, we did not always strive for exhaustive systematization; instead, we sometimes allowed ourselves to design pairs or groups of articles reflecting the idiosyncrasies of current scholarly interest in various topics.

Once our plans were laid, and details of the several parts of our conceptual scheme began to fall into place, contributors selected from the international community of scholars were invited to undertake assignments in their special fields of study. For each article, a length was specified and a brief scope description was suggested. Except in terms of length, however, contributors were not restricted. On the contrary, as experts in their fields, they were encouraged to develop their articles according to their best judgment. We requested that a selected bibliography accompany each article, to call attention to some of the most useful publications on the topics discussed, to make recommendations for further reading, and to indicate bibliographic resources. Our general aim was to procure fresh, original articles from the best writers and thinkers and scholars in the world, forming a collection that would accurately reflect what we currently know—or, as one distinguished contributor put it, what we think we know—about the particular histories of religions past and present, great and small, as well as of the general history of religion viewed on a universal scale.

Our reach, we believe, did not exceed our grasp. The response to our invitations was overwhelmingly affirmative, and as manuscripts began to arrive in our offices from all the four corners of the earth, we soon saw that our encyclopedia would fulfill its promise. Our garden flourished from the very beginning; almost every seed sprouted, and there were remarkably few weeds.

There were, however, many gardening tasks to be done. The arrival of manuscripts brought us finally and squarely face to face with certain editorial problems of writing style that we had earlier anticipated, and with a few that we had not. We were confronted, of course, by problems of translation, transliteration, and romanization of many foreign languages, which, given the international tenor of our contributors and the pandemic scope of our project, we had fully expected. But we were also confronted by some surprisingly thorny problems of vocabulary and orthography that arose from the need to coordinate various conventions employed in different areas of religious studies and the need to establish standards of writing style that would be both acceptable to scholars and intelligible to nonspecialists.

Given that we had set out to produce an English-language encyclopedia and that we had decided to invite contributions from leading scholars around the globe, regardless of their native languages, the specter of translation loomed large and early. Contributors who preferred to write their articles in languages other than English were encouraged to enlist the aid of a trusted colleague as translator. Many of them did so, and submitted their articles to us in English. Many more did not, and submitted their articles to us in a great variety of European and Asian languages. Drawing upon the talents of translators both here and abroad, as well as upon the language skills of staff members, we undertook to put all these articles into clear and accurate English. We hope that we have successfully avoided an equation that Italians make—"Traduttore è traditore" (roughly, "Translation is treachery")—and that we have everywhere been faithful to our contributors' meanings. Translators are credited at the end of each article that has been rendered into English.

Translation of prose does not, of course, lay to rest all editorial problems with foreign languages. Many lin-

guistic issues hovered over us, awaiting resolution. As a general policy, we had decided to restrict ourselves to the Latin alphabet, not venturing into such other alphabets as those of Sanskrit, Hebrew, Greek, or Arabic or into such other writing systems as those used to transcribe spoken Chinese, Japanese, or Korean. Yet all these languages, and many more, are the stuff of religious studies, and we were obliged to deal with them sensibly within an English context. A multitude of names and technical terms in all the world's languages, couched in various alphabets and writing systems, demanded to be appropriately spelled via transliteration or romanization into the Latin alphabet of English.

Generally, we agreed to prefer the modern, scholarly spellings that most closely approximate the orthography and/or pronunciation of the original language. Thus we decided to follow the transliteration and romanization systems used by the United States Library of Congress. These, by and large, are the traditional systems of scholarship in the English-speaking world and are thus to be found in the majority of secondary sources in Western libraries.

For languages for which the Library of Congress has issued no romanization table and for which no scholarly consensus has yet clearly emerged, we have made decisions on romanization based on the most expert advice we could secure. The languages of many indigenous peoples of Africa, the Americas, Australia, and Oceania, for example, have long been spoken but only recently written. For those for which standard systems of romanization have been established (e.g., Khoisan, Navajo), we have used them; for others, we have followed traditional practices. For languages for which scholarly practices of romanization vary widely—as in transcription of the languages of the ancient Near East—we have generally preferred the simplest system commonly used. For languages on which scholarly preference seems to be about equally divided between two standard systems of romanization (e.g., Tibetan), we have, realizing the impossibility of pleasing everyone, chosen to please ourselves. Gardeners' choice, as it were.

The spelling systems we have followed employ a moderate range of diacritical marks to indicate pronunciation in various languages. In addition to standard diacritics (e.g., the acute accent, the grave accent, the macron, the circumflex, the tilde, et al.), we decided to use an apostrophe (') to represent the hamzah in Arabic and the alef in Hebrew, a reversed apostrophe (') to represent 'ayn in Arabic and 'ayin in Hebrew, and a single quotation mark (') to indicate voiced consonants in Chinese. Besides these, we have used a few special characters (e.g., the thorn, the edh, et al.) in spelling Old English and Middle English, venerable ancestors of our

modern language, and Old Norse, its ancient Germanic cousin.

Having made all these decisions regarding our preferences for scholarly usage of foreign languages, we found that personal names, both mythic and historical, continued to give us editorial trouble. We wished, wherever possible, to spell names according to the transliteration and romanization systems we had chosen, thus establishing a harmonious editorial consistency and, at the same time, restoring a certain linguistic and cultural integrity to names whose origins had, in Western scholarship, generally been englished or latinized or grecized beyond recognition. We wished, in short, to name Greeks in Greek, Chinese in Chinese, Arabs in Arabic, and so on.

To a certain degree we have been successful in our attempts to spell proper names "properly." Where our spellings differ markedly from those to which English readers may be accustomed, we have usually given traditional forms in parentheses: Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), Meng-tzu (Mencius), Óðinn (Odin), Zarathushtra (Zoroaster). For historical figures who habitually spoke or wrote more than one language, we have transliterated their names from the language of their major works. Appropriate spelling of the names of Jewish scholars—polyglots all, it seems—has involved some particularly fine decisions, but, faced with several choices, we have generally preferred to give them in Hebrew.

Common sense, of course, frequently overruled all our editorial principles. Many names are too firmly embedded in the English language to bear alteration to more scholarly forms. Consequently, we have used latinized forms of most ancient Greek names (e.g., *Athena*, *Plato*, and *Phidias*, not *Athēnē*, *Platon*, and *Pheidias*), and we have invariably used englished names of biblical figures (e.g., *Moses*, *Jeremiah*, and *Jesus*, not *Mosheh*, *Yirmiyahu*, and *Yeshuah*). Otherwise, we have used commonly latinized or grecized names (e.g., *Confucius*, *Maimonides*) followed by more accurate forms in parentheses. Widely known place-names are given in englished forms (e.g., *Tokyo*, *Vienna*, and *Rome*, not *Tōkyō*, *Wien*, and *Roma*); less well known places are named in the language of the locale.

Appropriate spelling of names and terms in foreign languages was thus among our major editorial concerns, but no less so, and perhaps more so, was appropriate use of English terms. In devising our plans for the contents of the encyclopedia, and especially in choosing the terms under which articles would be entered into the overall alphabetical order, we endeavored to be constantly attuned to the nuances of meaning, and to the limits of meaning, of the terms that we chose to employ. We have used English words, of course, as

headings for many articles planned to present cross-cultural perspectives of broad topics. But in all instances where genuine doubts about the suitability of an entry term could legitimately be raised with respect to a particular religious tradition, we planned to present a separate discussion under the idiom employed by the tradition itself. In all articles on cross-cultural topics, we encouraged contributors to speculate on the usefulness of the entry term as an organizing principle in the study of religion. We often urged them, too, to venture beyond their customary range of specialization and to take the broadest possible view of their topics, thus developing rare hybrids of unusual texture and variegation.

The plants in our garden, then, are named by terms both English and non-English, and they are arranged in the order of the Latin alphabet, strictly letter by letter. Throughout the alphabetical order, articles are located under the terms that we hope will be first consulted by most readers, both specialists and nonspecialists. Entries under alternative spellings and synonyms give cross-references to the actual location of articles. In addition, an extensive system of cross-references within articles has been employed to direct the reader to discussions of related topics. As final aids to the reader, a synoptic outline of contents and a thorough topical index appear in volume 16, and it is there that curious researchers should turn for systematic references to the names, the terms, and the topics they seek.

Like mushrooms after rain, other issues of appropriate use of language sprang up all over our garden. Perhaps nowhere more than in religious studies are conventions of writing style so bewilderingly diverse and thus so challenging to editors intent on stylistic consistency. In establishing principles of capitalization, italicization, and other such minutiae of editorial style, we tried always to remain flexible, observing the scholarly shibboleths of various religious traditions and, wherever we could without generating confusion, accommodating contributors' preferences. We have striven for consistency, to be sure, but we have always let context be our guide, varying details of style to suit content wherever necessary. Our chief aim in all our decisions has been to make meaning clear.

By no means, however, did we abandon all standards of writing style and let chaos reign. Editing, like all creative acts, is a messy business, but, like gardening, it is also both an orderly process and a process of establishing order.

Order, engendering clarity, is a consummation we have devoutly wished. Through use of standard forms of names and parenthetical notations of alternate forms, we have tried to make sure that all persons and places mentioned are clearly identified. We have standardized year dates to those of the Gregorian calendar, generally cited in terms of the common era, but we have also given dates by other systems of chronology wherever context demanded them. We have kept abbreviations to a minimum, and we have listed those we have used in the front of each of our volumes. In devising bibliographies, we offered our contributors two standard formats, prose and list, and allowed them to choose the more appropriate to their articles. Regardless of format, our researchers have verified the accuracy of all bibliographic data, and we have taken pains to ensure that English-language editions are cited if they exist.

All these editorial concerns, among numerous others, have entered into the care of our garden. We are happy at last to see it in full flower, and we believe that it presents a splendid array of great variety, worth, and interest. We trust that Victor Turner would have been pleased.

Thanks due from the Macmillan staff to the many people who aided us in our gardening chores are expressed in a special section of acknowledgments in volume 16. I cannot close this introduction, however, without making a general acknowledgment of our gratitude to the contributors, whose ready cooperation greatly eased our efforts; to the consultants, who lent us the conceptual tools and technical devices that we needed; and to the board of editors, who shared our labors and became our friends. Most of all, we are grateful to have known and worked with Mircea Eliade, our editor in chief. In all his dealings with us, his generosity of spirit was boundless, his sweetness, kindness, and gentleness never failing. His genius is represented in these volumes, and through them it will live, in the words of Ben Jonson, as long as "we have wits to read, and praise to give."

CLAUDE CONYERS
New York, October 1986

Abbreviations and Symbols Used in This Work

abbr. abbreviated; abbreviation
abr. abridged; abridgment
AD *anno Domini*, in the year of the (our) Lord
Afrik. Afrikaans
AH *anno Hegirae*, in the year of the Hijrah
Akk. Akkadian
Ala. Alabama
Alb. Albanian
Am. *Amos*
AM *ante meridiem*, before noon
amend. amended; amendment
annot. annotated; annotation
Ap. *Apocalypse*
Apn. *Apocryphon*
app. appendix
Arab. Arabic
'Arakh. *'Arakhin*
Aram. Aramaic
Ariz. Arizona
Ark. Arkansas
Arm. Armenian
art. article (pl., arts.)
AS Anglo-Saxon
Asm. Mos. *Assumption of Moses*
Assyr. Assyrian
A.S.S.R. Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic
Av. Avestan
'A.Z. *'Avodah zarah*
b. born
Bab. Babylonian
Ban. Bantu
1 Bar. *1 Baruch*
2 Bar. *2 Baruch*
3 Bar. *3 Baruch*
4 Bar. *4 Baruch*
B.B. *Bava' batra'*
BBC British Broadcasting Corporation
BC before Christ
BCE before the common era
B.D. Bachelor of Divinity
Beits. *Beitsah*
Bekh. *Bekhorot*
Beng. Bengali
Ber. *Berakhot*

Berb. Berber
Bik. *Bikkurim*
bk. book (pl., bks.)
B.M. *Bava' metsi'a'*
BP before the present
B.Q. *Bava' qamma'*
Brāh. *Brāhmaṇa*
Bret. Breton
B.T. Babylonian Talmud
Bulg. Bulgarian
Burm. Burmese
c. *circa*, about, approximately
Calif. California
Can. Canaanite
Catal. Catalan
CE of the common era
Celt. Celtic
cf. *confer*, compare
Chald. Chaldean
chap. chapter (pl., chaps.)
Chin. Chinese
C.H.M. Community of the Holy Myrrhbearers
1 Chr. *1 Chronicles*
2 Chr. *2 Chronicles*
Ch. Slav. Church Slavic
cm centimeters
col. column (pl., cols.)
Col. *Colossians*
Colo. Colorado
comp. compiler (pl., comps.)
Conn. Connecticut
cont. continued
Copt. Coptic
1 Cor. *1 Corinthians*
2 Cor. *2 Corinthians*
corr. corrected
C.S.P. Congregatio Sancti Pauli, Congregation of Saint Paul (Paulists)
d. died
D Deuteronomic (source of the Pentateuch)
Dan. Danish
D.B. Divinitatis Baccalaureus, Bachelor of Divinity
D.C. District of Columbia
D.D. Divinitatis Doctor, Doctor of Divinity
Del. Delaware

Dem. *Dema'i*
dim. diminutive
diss. dissertation
Dn. *Daniel*
D.Phil. Doctor of Philosophy
Dt. *Deuteronomy*
Du. Dutch
E Elohist (source of the Pentateuch)
Eccl. *Ecclesiastes*
ed. editor (pl., eds.); edition; edited by
'Eduy. *'Eduyyot*
e.g. *exempli gratia*, for example
Egyp. Egyptian
1 En. *1 Enoch*
2 En. *2 Enoch*
3 En. *3 Enoch*
Eng. English
enl. enlarged
Eph. *Ephesians*
'Eruv. *'Eruvin*
1 Esd. *1 Esdras*
2 Esd. *2 Esdras*
3 Esd. *3 Esdras*
4 Esd. *4 Esdras*
esp. especially
Est. Estonian
Est. *Esther*
et al. *et alii*, and others
etc. *et cetera*, and so forth
Eth. Ethiopic
EV English version
Ex. *Exodus*
exp. expanded
Ez. *Ezekiel*
Ezr. *Ezra*
2 Ezr. *2 Ezra*
4 Ezr. *4 Ezra*
f. feminine; and following (pl., ff.)
fasc. fascicle (pl., fascs.)
fig. figure (pl., figs.)
Finn. Finnish
fl. *floruit*, flourished
Fla. Florida
Fr. French
frag. fragment
ft. feet
Ga. Georgia
Gal. *Galatians*

Gaul. Gaulish
Ger. German
Giṭ. *Giṭṭin*
Gn. *Genesis*
Gr. Greek
Ḥag. *Ḥagigah*
Ḥal. *Ḥallah*
Hau. Hausa
Hb. *Habakkuk*
Heb. Hebrew
Heb. *Hebrews*
Hg. *Haggai*
Hitt. Hittite
Hor. *Horayot*
Hos. *Hosea*
Ḥul. *Ḥullin*
Hung. Hungarian
ibid. *ibidem*, in the same place (as the one immediately preceding)
Icel. Icelandic
i.e. *id est*, that is
IE Indo-European
Ill. Illinois
Ind. Indiana
intro. introduction
Ir. Gael. Irish Gaelic
Iran. Iranian
Is. *Isaiah*
Ital. Italian
J Yahvist (source of the Pentateuch)
Jas. *James*
Jav. Javanese
Jb. *Job*
Jdt. *Judith*
Jer. *Jeremiah*
Jgs. *Judges*
Jl. *Joel*
Jn. *John*
1 Jn. *1 John*
2 Jn. *2 John*
3 Jn. *3 John*
Jon. *Jonah*
Jos. *Joshua*
Jpn. Japanese
JPS Jewish Publication Society translation (1985) of the Hebrew Bible
J.T. Jerusalem Talmud
Jub. *Jubilees*
Kans. Kansas
Kel. *Kelim*

Ker. Keritot
Ket. Ketubbot
1 Kgs. 1 Kings
2 Kgs. 2 Kings
Khois. Khoisan
Kil. Kil'ayim
km kilometers
Kor. Korean
Ky. Kentucky
l. line (pl., ll.)
La. Louisiana
Lam. Lamentations
Lat. Latin
Latv. Latvian
L. en Th. Licencié en Théologie, Licentiate in Theology
L. ès L. Licencié ès Lettres, Licentiate in Literature
Let. Jer. Letter of Jeremiah
lit. literally
Lith. Lithuanian
Lk. Luke
LL Late Latin
LL.D. Legum Doctor, Doctor of Laws
Lv. Leviticus
m meters
m. masculine
M.A. Master of Arts
Ma'as. Ma'aserot
Ma'as. Sh. Ma'aser sheni
Mak. Makkot
Makh. Makhshirin
Mal. Malachi
Mar. Marathi
Mass. Massachusetts
1 Mc. 1 Maccabees
2 Mc. 2 Maccabees
3 Mc. 3 Maccabees
4 Mc. 4 Maccabees
Md. Maryland
M.D. Medicinae Doctor, Doctor of Medicine
ME Middle English
Meg. Megillah
Me'il. Me'ilah
Men. Menahot
MHG Middle High German
mi. miles
Mi. Micah
Mich. Michigan
Mid. Middot
Minn. Minnesota
Miq. Miqva'ot
MIran. Middle Iranian
Miss. Mississippi
Mk. Mark
Mo. Missouri
Mo'ed Q. Mo'ed qatan
Mont. Montana
MPers. Middle Persian
MS. manuscriptum, manuscript (pl., MSS)
Mt. Matthew
MT Masoretic text
n. note
Na. Nahum
Nah. Nahuatl
Naz. Nazir

N.B. nota bene, take careful note
N.C. North Carolina
n.d. no date
N.Dak. North Dakota
NEB New English Bible
Nebr. Nebraska
Ned. Nedarim
Neg. Nega'im
Neh. Nehemiah
Nev. Nevada
N.H. New Hampshire
Nid. Niddah
N.J. New Jersey
Nm. Numbers
N.Mex. New Mexico
no. number (pl., nos.)
Nor. Norwegian
n.p. no place
n.s. new series
N.Y. New York
Ob. Obadiah
O.Cist. Ordo Cisterciencium, Order of Citeaux (Cistercians)
OCS Old Church Slavonic
OE Old English
O.F.M. Ordo Fratrum Minorum, Order of Friars Minor (Franciscans)
OFr. Old French
Ohal. Ohalot
OHG Old High German
OIr. Old Irish
OIran. Old Iranian
Okla. Oklahoma
ON Old Norse
O.P. Ordo Praedicatorum, Order of Preachers (Dominicans)
OPers. Old Persian
op. cit. opere citato, in the work cited
OPrus. Old Prussian
Oreg. Oregon
'Orl. 'Orlah
O.S.B. Ordo Sancti Benedicti, Order of Saint Benedict (Benedictines)
p. page (pl., pp.)
P Priestly (source of the Pentateuch)
Pa. Pennsylvania
Pahl. Pahlavi
Par. Parah
para. paragraph (pl., paras.)
Pers. Persian
Pes. Pesahim
Ph.D. Philosophiae Doctor, Doctor of Philosophy
Phil. Philippians
Phlm. Philemon
Phoen. Phoenician
pl. plural; plate (pl., pls.)
PM post meridiem, after noon
Pol. Polish
pop. population
Port. Portuguese
Prv. Proverbs

Ps. Psalms
Ps. 151 Psalm 151
Ps. Sol. Psalms of Solomon
pt. part (pl., pts.)
1 Pt. 1 Peter
2 Pt. 2 Peter
Pth. Parthian
Q hypothetical source of the synoptic Gospels
Qid. Qiddushin
Qin. Qinnim
r. reigned; ruled
Rab. Rabbah
rev. revised
R. ha-Sh. Ro'sh ha-shanah
R.I. Rhode Island
Rom. Romanian
Rom. Romans
R.S.C.J. Societas Sacratissimi Cordis Jesu, Religious of the Sacred Heart
RSV Revised Standard Version of the Bible
Ru. Ruth
Rus. Russian
Rv. Revelation
Rv. Ezr. Revelation of Ezra
San. Sanhedrin
S.C. South Carolina
Scot. Gael. Scottish Gaelic
S.Dak. South Dakota
sec. section (pl., secs.)
Sem. Semitic
ser. series
sg. singular
Sg. Song of Songs
Sg. of 3 Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men
Shab. Shabbat
Shav. Shavu'ot
Sheq. Sheqalim
Sib. Or. Sibylline Oracles
Sind. Sindhi
Sinh. Sinhala
Sir. Ben Sira
S.J. Societas Jesu, Society of Jesus (Jesuits)
Skt. Sanskrit
1 Sm. 1 Samuel
2 Sm. 2 Samuel
Sogd. Sogdian
Sot Sotah
sp. species (pl., spp.)
Span. Spanish
sq. square
S.S.R. Soviet Socialist Republic
st. stanza (pl., ss.)
S.T.M. Sacrae Theologiae Magister, Master of Sacred Theology
Suk. Sukkah
Sum. Sumerian
supp. supplement; supplementary
Sus. Susanna
s.v. sub verbo, under the word (pl., s.v.v.)

Swed. Swedish
Syr. Syriac
Syr. Men. Syriac Menander
Ta'an. Ta'anit
Tam. Tamil
Tam. Tamid
Tb. Tobit
T.D. Taishō shinshū daizōkyō, edited by Takakusu Junjirō et al. (Tokyo, 1922–1934)
Tem. Temurah
Tenn. Tennessee
Ter. Terumot
Tev. Y. Tevul yom
Tex. Texas
Th.D. Theologicae Doctor, Doctor of Theology
1 Thes. 1 Thessalonians
2 Thes. 2 Thessalonians
Thrac. Thracian
Ti. Titus
Tib. Tibetan
1 Tm. 1 Timothy
2 Tm. 2 Timothy
T. of 12 Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs
Toh. Tohorot
Tong. Tongan
trans. translator, translators; translated by; translation
Turk. Turkish
Ukr. Ukrainian
Upan. Upaniṣad
U.S. United States
U.S.S.R. Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Uqts. Uqtsin
v. verse (pl., vv.)
Va. Virginia
var. variant; variation
Viet. Vietnamese
viz. videlicet, namely
vol. volume (pl., vols.)
Vt. Vermont
Wash. Washington
Wel. Welsh
Wis. Wisconsin
Wis. Wisdom of Solomon
W.Va. West Virginia
Wyo. Wyoming
Yad. Yadayim
Yev. Yevamot
Yi. Yiddish
Yor. Yoruba
Zav. Zavim
Zec. Zechariah
Zep. Zephaniah
Zev. Zevahim

* hypothetical
? uncertain; possibly; perhaps
° degrees
+ plus
− minus
= equals; is equivalent to
× by; multiplied by
→ yields

A

AARON, or, in Hebrew, Aharon; Israelite leader and priest who flourished, according to tradition, in the thirteenth century BCE. In its redacted form, the Pentateuch provides a fairly complete biography of Aaron, the first priest in the biblical tradition. Born to Amram and Jochebed of the Levite tribe when the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, he was the elder brother by three years of the great prophet-leader Moses, and he assisted Moses in liberating the Israelites and leading them through the Sinai wilderness to the promised Land of Israel. Israel's God, YHVH, instructed Moses to appoint Aaron and his sons as the exclusive priests of the people, and Aaron ministered in the capacity of chief priest until he died, in the last year of the journey.

Most Bible scholars, however, regard this unified picture of the life and role of Aaron as a relatively late invention of the so-called Priestly school (the P source). Biblical traditions concerning Aaron present diverse views. In addition to the Priestly representation, in which the functions of Aaron and his sons establish precedents for the official priests of all succeeding generations (see, for example, *Exodus* 30:10, 40:15, and *Leviticus* 6:11), Aaron is remembered as a military-political leader who acts as a lieutenant of Moses in the Israelites' battle against the Amalekites (*Ex.* 17:12) and who serves as a magistrate in Moses' absence (*Ex.* 24:14). Aaron is cited as a leader of the Exodus in *Micah* 6:4 and in *Psalms* 77:21.

Aaron also fulfills an apparently prophetic role. He serves as Moses' spokesman to the Israelites and to the pharaoh of Egypt, performing magical feats by the power of YHVH. In *Numbers* 12, Aaron and his sister Miriam challenge Moses' unique prophetic status, claiming revelation for themselves as well, but YHVH rebukes them.

Two Pentateuchal narratives revolve around the legitimacy of Aaron's priesthood. In *Numbers* 17:16ff. Moses vindicates Aaron: he inscribes the names of the tribes on twelve poles, but only the pole of the Levite tribe, bearing Aaron's name, sprouts blossoms. In *Exodus* 32 Aaron succumbs to the people's plea to construct a physical image of God and makes a golden calf. The Pentateuch (*Ex.* 32:35, *Dt.* 9:20) condemns Aaron for this apostasy and appears to favor those Levites associated with Moses over the priests represented by Aaron.

Aaron's golden calf is generally associated with the calves set up centuries later by King Jeroboam I (r. 928–907 BCE) in the far northern town of Dan and in the central town of Bethel after the northern tribes of Israel seceded from the Israelite empire circa 920 BCE. On the basis of this, and of the connection of Aaronite priests to Bethel mentioned in *Judges* 20:26–28, some scholars have concluded that Aaron was the founder of the northern priesthood, which was later assimilated into the Jerusalem priesthood. Others believe that the Aaronites originated in the south and because of their traditional legitimacy were appointed to positions in the northern cult.

As the various traditions were combined in the Pentateuch, Aaron became the paradigm of the priest and Moses of the prophet, but Aaron's role was clearly subordinated to that of his younger brother.

[*See also* Levites *and* Priesthood, *article on* Jewish Priesthood.]

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ABARBANEL, ISAAC. *See* Abravanel, Isaac.

ABBAHU (fl. toward the turn of the fourth century CE), Palestinian amora. Abbahu was the younger contemporary of both Shim'on ben Laqish ("Resh Laqish") and El'azar ben Pedat, with whom he studied, but his main teacher was Yoḥanan bar Nappaḥa'. Abbahu eventually settled in Caesarea, where he became head of the rabbinic academy. Because of the cosmopolitan nature of that city he had frequent contacts with Christians, Samaritans, and other "heretics"; surviving reports suggest that Abbahu engaged in frequent polemics against these rivals.

Among the reports of these polemics are an exegesis attributed to Abbahu in which *Isaiah* 44:6 is taken to be God's explicit denial of a father or a brother or a son (*Ex. Rab.* 29.4) and a remark ascribed to Abbahu to the effect that "if a man tells you 'I am God' he is lying" (J.T., *Ta'an.* 2.1, 65b). Abbahu is also said to have brought about a change in the legal status of the Samaritans in the Jewish community so that now they were to be considered gentiles in all respects (J.T., *'A.Z.* 5.4, 44d).

Abbahu engaged in secular studies and, to his colleagues' consternation, taught his daughter Greek (J.T., *Shab.* 6.1, 7d). His familiarity with the surrounding culture gave him relatively easy access to the Roman authorities, a privilege that he used to intercede for his brethren when the occasion demanded (B.T., *Ket.* 17a). This combination of openness to the surrounding culture and willingness to combat rival religious movements made Abbahu an effective advocate of the rabbinic viewpoint. He was able to insist on the exclusive legitimacy of rabbinic teachings without seeming to demand that Jews live in isolation from their surroundings or that they abjure any interest in the activities of their neighbors.

Some of Abbahu's ritual enactments, most notably concerning the sounding of the ram's horn on Ro'sh ha-Shanah, the New Year festival (B.T., *R. ha-Sh.* 34a), became normative practice in Jewish life. Despite his polemical activities, he was remembered within his own community as a peacemaker and a man of modesty (B.T., *Soṭ.* 40a). He was said to have been a man of wealth and good looks. His disciples included leading scholars of the next generation.

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ROBERT GOLDENBERG

ABBAYE (d. circa 338), a leading fourth-generation Babylonian amora. Abbaye, who studied with his uncle Rabbah bar Naḥmani and with Yosef bar Ḥiyya' of Pumbedita, drew on teachings both from Babylonia and, indirectly, from Palestine; his teachings relay his erudition and subtle analytic ability. At Yosef's death (c. 323), Abbaye became the leading teacher in Pumbedita, where he taught legal, aggadic, and exegetical subjects to students individually and, in *pirqa'* gatherings held on sabbaths and special occasions, to the public at large. He applied rabbinic law in his role as judge of the local Jewish court and supervisor of the market's weights and measures.

With an independent mind, he evaluated both sides of issues and reportedly even resorted to curses to support or oppose a given opinion (B.T., *Ber.* 29a). Like Rava', Yosef's son, he used terminology to conceptualize the Mishnah's literary characteristics and taught *baraitot,* his own versions of formulated law that might dispute the Mishnah. Rava' and Abbaye compared earlier teachings and assayed their underlying logic and relation to the Mishnah. The Talmud's records of these discussions may, however, have been shaped by postamoraic authorities. Because Abbaye refused to harmonize disparities between the Mishnah and other sources, he limited the Mishnah, saying its ruling did not apply to all cases,

or admitted the inconsistency between the sources. This sensitivity to the text is likewise seen in his interest in assessing what are appropriate interpretations of scripture (B.T., *Ḥul.* 133a).

Stories about Abbaye portray him as humble; dedicated to Torah study, even when poor (B.T., *Giṭ.* 60b); solicitous of students (B.T., *Shab.* 118b–119a), the elderly, and gentiles (B.T., *Ber.* 17a); and a doer of good works (B.T., *R. ha-Sh.* 18a). This reputation is reflected in his dictum that "to love the Lord your God" requires a person to make God's name become beloved by others, for people will attribute one's good deeds to one's devotion to God (B.T., *Yoma'* 86a). Related teachings of Abbaye assert that whoever follows the sages' teaching is called a saint and that Torah study and good deeds bring divine blessings and protection against evil. Reportedly exhibiting an awareness of God from his youth (B.T., *Ber.* 48a), he lectured on creation and the manifestation of the divine in the world as well as on sin and redemption, and taught that the divine presence is found in synagogues, though he elevated the piety of Torah study over that of prayer.

More supernatural stories circulated about Abbaye and Rava' than about others in their generation, and in them Abbaye has contact with the divine realm even more frequently than Rava'. People believed that Abbaye was protected from demons, a recipient of divine communications, a source of practical good advice, and, like some other ancient holy individuals, a juggler (B.T., *Suk.* 53a). On the other hand, later circles declared that the law follows Rava' and not Abbaye in all but six cases (B.T., *B.M.* 22b).

[*See also* Amoraim *and* Rava'.]

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'ABD AL-JABBĀR (AH 323?–414/5/6, 935?–1023/4/5 CE), more fully known as Abū al-Ḥasan 'Abd al-Jabbār ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Hamadhānī al-Asadābādī; one of the last famous Mu'tazilī theologians, belonging to the eleventh "class" or "category" (*ṭa-*

baqah), according to al-Murtaḍā's classification in *Kitāb al-munyal wa-al-amal.* 'Abd al-Jabbār was probably born at Asadābād in central Iran, in the days of the Buyids. He obtained his religious education at Hamadhān (c. 950–952), where he applied his efforts to *ḥadīth* (tradition) and Shāfi'ī *fiqh* (jurisprudence). In theology, at that period, he belonged to the Ash'arī school.

From Hamadhān 'Abd al-Jabbār proceeded to Basra, where, contrary to al-Ash'arī, he embraced the Mu'tazilī doctrine and devoted himself thereafter to *kalām* as an intellectual perspective. For a certain time he studied with Abū Isḥāq ibn 'Ayyāsh, pupil and successor of the famous theologian Abū Hāshim; then he went to Baghdad, where he studied with 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī (d. 978) for a long time. In 970, he answered the invitation of the vizier Ibn 'Abbād (938–995) to proceed to Rayy, one of the Buyid capitals, where he was made *qāḍī al-quḍāt* ("judge of judges"), a title distinguishing him as the uncontested chief of the Mu'tazilah at that time. Upon the death of Ibn 'Abbād, 'Abd al-Jabbār was deposed by Fakhr al-Dawlah, who confiscated the greater part of his possessions. He died at a very advanced age at the gates of Rayy upon returning from a trip.

'Abd al-Jabbār's considerable intellectual activity (he is said to have written almost four hundred thousand pages) is concerned with religious law *(fiqh)* and dogmatic theology *(kalām)*. One of his juridical works, the *Kitāb al-'ahd,* is cited with praise by Ibn Khaldūn, who considers it one of the best works dealing with the sources of the law. But he preferred theology to law, for in his words: "It is said that many people devote themselves to *fiqh* out of worldly motives, whereas theology seeks only God."

Al-Murtaḍā, in his *Kitāb al-munyah wa-al-amal,* classifies the work of the great *qāḍī* into different categories:

1. Works that deal with *kalām: Al-dawā'ī wa-al-ṣawārif, Al-khilāf wa-al-wifāq, Al-khāṭir, Al-i'timād, Al-man'wa-al-tamānu', Mā yajūz fīhi al-tazāyud wa-mā lā yajūz,* and so forth.
2. Dictated works: *Al-mughnī, Al-fi'l wa-al-fā'il, Al-mabsūṭ, Al-muḥīṭ, Al-ḥikmah wa-al-ḥakīm.*
3. Commentaries: *Sharḥ al-jāmi'ayn, Sharḥ al-uṣūl, Sharḥ al-maqālāt, Sharḥ al-a'rāḍ.*
4. Works on the methodology of *fiqh: Al-nihāyah wa-al-'umad,* and its commentary.
5. Books on polemics: *Naqd al-luma', Naqd al-imāmah.*
6. Responses given to a certain number of questions that had been asked of him: *Al-rāzīyāt, Al-ash'arīyāt, Al-qāshānīyāt, Al-khawārizmīyāt, Al-naysābūrīyāt.*
7. Books on parallels between different authors *(khilāf):*

Fī-al-khilāf bayn al-shaykhayn, that is, the two Jub-
bā'īs, father and son.
8. Sermons, such as the *Naṣīḥat al-mutafaqqihah*.

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bār's *summa theologiae*, a work in twenty volumes,
of which fourteen have so far been published (Cairo,
1960–).

The influence of 'Abd al-Jabbār has been consider-
able: all of the works of the later Mu'tazilah are full of
references to his opinions. 'Abd ar-Raḥmān Badawī, in
Madhāhib al-islāmiyīn (Beirut, 1971), notes six of his
principal disciples: Abū Rashīd al-Nīsābūrī, Abū Sa'īd
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al-Qāsim al-Bustī, Abū al-Ḥusayn Muḥammad ibn 'Ali
al-Baṣrī, and Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad ibn
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Translated from French by Mary Ann Danner

'ABD AL-RĀZIQ, 'ALĪ (1888–1966), Muslim jurist
and author. Born in a village of Middle Egypt, 'Abd al-
Rāziq studied Islamic law at al-Azhar in Cairo, from
which he was graduated in 1911. In 1912, he went to
Oxford to study politics and economics, remaining
there until the outbreak of World War I. In 1915, he was
appointed a judge in the *sharī'ah* courts in Alexandria
and other provincial towns. The publication of his book
Al-Islām wa-uṣūl al-ḥukm (Islam and the Fundamentals
of Authority) in 1925 aroused violent uproar. 'Abd al-
Rāziq was formally condemned by a council of twenty-
four leading *'ulamā'* (Muslim scholars) of al-Azhar, with
the rector at their head. Dismissed from his appoint-
ment and declared unfit to hold public office, he lived
the rest of his life privately.

Al-Islām wa-uṣūl al-ḥukm, published only one year
after Atatürk's abolition of the caliphate, is a treatise on
the theory of government and the source of authority in
Islam. 'Abd al-Rāziq's main argument is that there is no
such thing as an Islamic system of government. Neither
the Qur'ān nor *ḥadīth* (tradition) stipulates the exis-
tence of the caliphate or the combination of temporal
and religious powers. *Ijmā'* (Islamic consensus) also
provides no basis for the caliphate's legitimacy. In fact,
historically the caliphate was based on power and coer-
cion and is not, therefore, a necessary part of the reli-
gion of Islam.

'Abd al-Rāziq's most radical theory had to do with
the prophecy of Muḥammad. His view was that, like
other prophets, Muḥammad had a spiritual mission: he
was sent to reveal a truth about God and to guide men
to a virtuous life; he was not sent to exercise political
authority. Thus, 'Abd al-Rāziq denied any constitu-
tional implications in *sharī'ah* (Islamic law). Herein lies
his revolutionary departure from the orthodox position
on Muḥammad's prophecy and the *sharī'ah*, and hence
the violent opposition of the *'ulamā'*.

Muslim theologians had always taught that Islam
was unique because it was at once a religious and polit-
ical community. 'Abd al-Rāziq disclaimed any political
foundation in the *sharī'ah*. Condemned by the *'ulamā'*,
his ideas were nevertheless accepted by the ruling elites
in Egypt and later in most Arab countries. Western-
modeled constitutions were inaugurated, and the secu-
lar nation-state finally emerged in the world of Islam.

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IBRAHIM I. IBRAHIM

'ABD AL-WAHHĀB. *See* Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, Muḥammad.

'ABDUH, MUḤAMMAD (AH 1266–1322/1849–1905 CE), Egyptian intellectual regarded as the architect of Islamic modernism and one of the most prominent Islamic reformers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He was born into a well-to-do family in a village of the Nile Delta. At the age of thirteen he went to study at the Aḥmadī Mosque in Ṭanṭā and continued his education at al-Azhar, the renowned university in Cairo, where he studied logic, philosophy, and mysticism. For a time he came under the influence of the pan-Islamic reformer Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and became involved in the 'Urābī revolt against the British (1881–1882). Exiled for six years after the revolt was put down, he worked in Lebanon to establish an Islamic school system and collaborated with al-Afghānī in Paris on a number of activities, including the publication of a popular journal, *Al-'urwah al-wuthqā* (The Firmest Bond). The tone of the paper was radical and agitational, reflecting the revolutionary spirit of Afghānī rather than the reformist one of 'Abduh. Although it was naturally banned in Islamic countries under British occupation, its eighteen issues were smuggled in and widely followed by Muslim intellectuals. The two men also established an association under the same name working for Muslim unity and social reform. In the course of these activities, 'Abduh traveled to Britain and Tunis and reportedly entered Egypt in disguise.

During his career 'Abduh held a number of important positions. In 1880, he became the editor of *Al-waqā'ī al-miṣrīyah*, the official gazette. In 1889 he was appointed judge and ten years later, he became the *muftī* of Egypt, the highest authority on the interpretation of Muslim law. As muftī he initiated reform of the religious courts and the administration of *awqāf* (religious endowments).

'Abduh's writings include *Risālat al-wāridāt* (Treatise Consisting of Mystical Inspirations), *Risālat al-tawḥīd* (translated in English as *The Theology of Unity*), and the interpretation of Qur'ān known as *Tafsīr al-manār*. In these writings, one finds traces of different Islamic influences: mysticism, Mu'tazilī theology, activism, and orthodoxy. *Risālat al-tawḥīd* was intended to be a brief and simple statement on theological issues. Distinguishing between the essentials and inessentials of religion, 'Abduh argued that a major source of the Muslims' decline was their inability to make this distinction. Revelation and reason are complementary ways to reach truth, since reason is the power that enables the Muslim to distinguish truth from falsehood. Freedom of will also depends on human knowledge or reason.

'Abduh considered Islam the cornerstone of private and public life. Yet he was struck by the decay of Islamic societies, which he saw as the main problem that all Muslim thinkers had to face. He sought to regenerate the religion and purify it of what he believed were alien accretions from the past. The aim of his life, as he defined it, was to free the minds of Muslims from the shackles of *taqlīd* (blind acceptance of tradition) and to demonstrate the compatibility of Islam with modernity. For him, the cure for the ills of Muslim societies lay in a return to true Islam through the recovery of its essentials in the Qur'ān and *sunnah* (traditions of the Prophet) and the interpretation of these texts in the light of modern times.

The best method to achieve these goals, 'Abduh believed, was through *ijtihād* (the exercise of individual judgment) and the establishment of links between certain traditional concepts and the ideas of the modern age. Thus, *maṣlaḥah*, the public interest, became utility, and *shūrā*, the caliph's council, became a consultative assembly. He maintained that there was no incompatibility between Islam and reason or between revelation and science. Islam encouraged reason, condemned blind imitation, attacked fatalism, and affirmed the exercise of free will. The influence of Mu'tazilī ideas upon his thought is most evident at this point. He argued that Islam was in harmony with and

tolerant of all rational inquiry and science. Thus, the scientific achievements of the West, to which the Muslims had contributed in their classical age, should be adopted without fear or hesitation. Failure to do so would lead either to stagnation and further underdevelopment or to the indiscriminate importation of Western ideas, resulting in a loss of Islamic values.

Concrete reform and social change were 'Abduh's primary concerns. Like other reformers of his time, he addressed himself primarily to political issues rather than the rethinking of basic religious positions. He believed that the legal system was a crucial factor in the prosperity of countries and that laws should change according to circumstances. The reform of Islamic law requires that the principle of *maṣlaḥah* be upheld and that jurists exercise *talfīq* ("piecing together") to synthesize judgments from the four Sunnī legal schools. Stressing the need for social and political reform, he underlined the importance of education and attacked despotic rulers; for him the true Muslim leader was once bound by law and obliged to consult with the people.

The essence of 'Abduh's legacy, then, is his attempt to conduct a dialogue between Islam and the modern world; by so doing, he, perhaps more than any other Muslim thinker, contributed to the development of modernist and reformist trends in Islam, especially in the Arab countries and Indonesia. Ultimately 'Abduh owes his prominence to his search for an indigenous Islamic philosophy for modern times. He developed criteria by which the impact of Western civilization could be differentiated and controlled and elaborated a synthesis of Islam and modernity with which Muslims could remain committed to their religion while actively engaged in modern society. His synthesis was subject to criticism, but the approach has left a marked impact on modern Islamic thought and society.

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ABEL. *See* Cain and Abel.

ABELARD, PETER (1079–1142), logician and Christian theologian. Peter Abelard was born at Le Pallet, outside of Nantes (Brittany). He chose to pursue the study and teaching of logic and journeyed to hear the lectures of Roscelin of Compiègne at Loches (Anjou); he later went to Paris to attend classes with the renowned dialectician William of Champeaux. His celebrated controversy with William on the question of universals revealed the persuasiveness of Abelard's quick mind and penetrating insight. Abelard's own teaching career began in Melun and Corbeil to the south of Paris, but he soon returned to Paris, teaching at Nôtre-Dame and at Mont-Sainte-Geneviève, just across the Seine from the capital.

Abelard's interest in applying twelfth-century methods of dialectical inquiry to Christian doctrine led him to study theology at Laon (c. 1113) with Anselm of Laon, who was recognized for his lectures on patristic teaching and for his role in the formation of a standardized biblical commentary *(Glossa ordinaria)*. Abelard's return to Paris before he completed the course of studies was influenced by several factors. He was indeed disenchanted with Anselm's method, which, although it organized information in a systematic fashion, relied more on repeating past authority than on any personal critique. The work at Laon was a formidable accomplishment, but Peter wanted more. He was determined to bring a fresh approach to theology.

It was at this time that Abelard met Héloïse, the niece of Fulbert, a canon of Nôtre-Dame. Peter became her tutor, friend, and lover. Much of their early relationship—the love affair, the birth of their son Astrolabe, a secret marriage followed by the punitive castration of Abelard ordered by Fulbert—is recorded by Peter in *The Story of My Misfortunes*. After the tragedy and his loss of prestige as a teacher, Abelard insisted that Héloïse enter religious life at the convent of Argenteuil (c. 1119) while he made profession at the royal Abbey of Saint-Denis. Peter Abelard was officially affiliated with Saint-Denis for almost four years. During this time he studied the sources of the Christian tradition. The brilliant mind that had once captured the imagination of students of logic was now applied to sorting out a coherent presentation of doctrine from a nearly unintelligible ac-

cretion of teachings. The task was awesome. Abelard's *Sic et non* (Yes and No) faced the problem directly by arranging conflicting patristic opinions around key doctrinal issues. The work was timely and challenging. Students, armed with the exegetical principles enunciated in the prologue, were eager to resolve the 158 questions. Abelard's second theological work from this time was a discussion of the Trinity structured within dialectical analysis *(Theologia "Summi boni")* and was not favorably received. The text was in fact condemned at a public trial in Soissons (1121). His treatise was burned, and Peter was temporarily confined to the nearby Abbey of Saint-Medard. He returned to Saint-Denis but only briefly; in 1122, Abelard was released from the obligation of residency there.

Humiliated at the turn of events in his life, Peter sought solitude. When he was given land along the banks of the Ardusson at Quincy (Troyes), he built an oratory and dedicated it to the Paraclete. Within a short time, however, students came to his retreat. In his teaching, he began to modify his approach in his discussion of the Trinity, and he composed the first draft of his second major theological treatise, *Christian Theology*. Abelard then accepted election as abbot of Saint-Guildas, a monastery near Vannes (Britanny), and unsuccessfully attempted monastic reform (c. 1127).

We know little of Abelard's public activities after this. But in 1129, Suger, then abbot of Saint-Denis, reclaimed the lands of Argenteuil from Héloïse's community. She turned to Peter for assistance, and he gave them the oratory he had built. When the foundation was confirmed by Innocent II and the bishop of Troyes (1131), Héloïse became the first prioress. As cofounder with Héloïse, Abelard was considerably involved in the formation of the ideals that would shape the community's life. Héloïse's critique of the Benedictine rule (letter 6 of the published correspondence of Héloïse and Abelard), for example, elicited two doctrinal letters from Abelard: *On the Origin of Nuns* and *Rule of Life* (letters 7 and 8). Abelard also replied to forty-two questions on problematic scriptural texts sent by Héloïse *(Problemata Heloissae)* and commented extensively on the opening chapters of *Genesis (Expositio in Hexaemeron)*. He prepared a collection of sermons, prayers, a breviary, and 143 hymns as well. His recommendations about the study of biblical languages (letter 9) and his instruction on reading scripture gave Héloïse extraordinary directives concerning the relationship of study to understanding the scriptures.

This work with the Paraclete was, however, only one aspect of Abelard's achievement. From 1135 onward, he was engaged in the composition of his *Ethics*, in expounding Paul's *Letter to the Romans*, and in drafting a new study on the Trinity *(Theologia "Scholarium")*. Several doctrinal letters and *Dialogue of a Philosopher with a Jew and with a Christian* are also the work of these fruitful years. But the newness of Abelard's ideas and the rigor with which he upheld the primacy of dialectics for a true theology threatened many. William of Saint-Thierry and Bernard of Clairvaux were among Peter's opponents, and through their efforts there was a second condemnation of Abelard by the Council of Sens (1140). Peter insisted that his teaching was misunderstood and intended to appeal his case with the pope. Ill health made a journey to Rome impossible, however, and Abelard retired to Cluny, where he was befriended by its abbot, Peter the Venerable. The final writings, *Apology* and *Confession of Faith*, reflect Abelard's sincerity and doctrinal orthodoxy. Abelard ultimately left Cluny for Saint-Marcel-sur-Saône, a smaller priory, where he died, probably in 1142.

Although Abelard's initial fame rested on his success as a teacher of logic, within a few decades his commentaries on logic (the *Introductiones parvulum* and the *Logica ingredientibus*), as well as his own treatise, the *Dialectica*, were replaced by the metaphysics of Aristotle. In the theological arena, Abelard exercised unusual leadership as a teacher during the formative years in the developing theology of the schools. His students were numerous, and a few school works, such as the *Sentences of Hermann (Epitome theologiae Christianae)* or the considerable exposition of Pauline writings *(Commentaria Cantabrigiensis)*, rely heavily on Abelard's teaching. Several well-known masters also turned to Abelard as a significant thinker. Perhaps the most important of these is Peter Lombard, whose *Book of Sentences*, modeled on Abelard's *Sic et non*, contains many of Abelard's opinions and became the primary text for training theologians during the next four hundred years. However, the most lasting influence Peter held was with the community of the Paraclete. Until its dissolution during the French Revolution (1792), the monastery held its own as the special foundation of Héloïse and Master Peter, preserving Abelardian manuscripts and conserving the finer points of his teachings.

The literary legacy of Abelard records the genius of a probing, mature, and experienced teacher. He expounded texts vigorously and forged seminal ideas for the development of Christian thought. He opposed Augustinian views on several counts, denying for example that the guilt of Adam was transmitted to humanity. Abelard created a more precise language to describe the interior character of sin and moral culpability and considered consent as the single factor that could render

human behavior sinful. He also believed that the redemption theories that expressed the notion of a price or ransom imposed on God were unacceptable. Instead, Abelard held that Christ's redemptive work as the incarnate Word, in life as in death, was the supreme expression and fulfillment of God's creative love. Finally, Abelard's approach to theology was part of a new mode of thought that brought questions, debate, and systematization to the fore as the science of sacred doctrine. Abelard did this with bravado, drawing upon the best in these procedures, creating a few himself, and integrating both method and doctrine through the filter of his penetrating intelligence.

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ABHINAVAGUPTA (fl. c. 975–1025 CE), Kashmirian Śaiva theologian. Descended from Atrigupta, a brahman scholar brought to Kashmir from the Doab by King Lalitāditya (c. 724–760), Abhinavagupta was the son, conceived in Kaula ritual, of Vimalā and Narasiṃhagupta. He lost his mother in early childhood—a circumstance that he saw as the start of his spiritual progress—and was trained by his learned Śaiva father in grammar, logic, and hermeneutics. Later, when immersed in the study of the poetic arts, he became intoxicated with devotion to Śiva, and, giving up all thoughts of marriage and family, pursued the life of a student in the homes of numerous exponents of the various Śaiva traditions and their opponents.

Abhinavagupta's major works fall into four groups, treating the Trika, the Krama, the Pratyabhijñā, and aesthetics. In the field of the Trika his main effort went into the exegesis of the *Mālinīvijayottara Tantra*, which he saw not only as the fundamental scripture of the Trika but also as the essence of the entire Śaiva revelation in all its branches. In the *Mālinīvijayavārttika* he elaborated this claim, arguing for a "supreme nondualism" *(paramādvayavāda)* that attributed to the Absolute as autonomous consciousness the power to contain both plurality and unity as the modes of its self-representation, and thereby demonstrated that the Trika, as the embodiment in revelation of this Absolute, transcends and contains the dichotomy between the orthodox (dualist) and heterodox (nondualist) directions in Śaivism then confronting each other.

The monumental *Tantrāloka*, composed later, expounded all aspects of the Trika, theoretical, yogic, and ritual, while seeking to integrate within the catholic authority of the *Mālinīvijayottara Tantra* later, more heterodox developments, particularly the Krama-based cult of Kālī. Between these two works he composed the *Parātriṃśikāvivaraṇa*, in which he focused on the elite Kaula practices of the Trika. The Krama, strongly present in the Trika of *Tantrāloka*, was the object of independent study in his commentary on the *Kramastotra* (Krama Hymn) of the lineage of Jñānanetranātha. This either has not survived or has not yet come to light. Of Abhinavagupta's work on the Krama we have only his short *Kramastotra* and a quotation from an unnamed work in which he follows the Krama worship of the *Devīpañcaśataka*.

In the philosophical tradition of the Pratyabhijñā we have two masterly commentaries, the *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī* on the *Pratyabhijñākārikā* of his teacher's teacher Utpaladeva, and the *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛtivimarśinī* on that author's lost auto-commentary on the same. Through the profound philosophical scholarship of these works the nondualistic tradition was fully equipped to justify its rejection of the dualism of the Śaiva Siddhānta, the illusionism of the Vedānta, and the lack of the concept of transcendental synthesis in the nondualistic idealism of the Yogācāra Buddhists, while seeing these positions as approximations to its own.

In the field of aesthetics Abhinavagupta achieved pan-Indian recognition for his commentaries on the *Dhvanyāloka* of Ānandavardhana, fortifying the latter's doctrine of the primacy of suggestion *(dhvani)* in poetry, and on the *Bharatanāṭyaśāstra*. This second commentary, the *Abhinavabhāratī*, exhibits vast learning in the arts of drama, dance, and music, and is justly famous for its subtle theory on the nature of aesthetic experience as a distinct mode of cognition between worldly, appetitive awareness and the blissful interiority of enlightened consciousness. The study of aesthetics was traditional among the Śaivas of Kashmir, reflecting the importance of dance and music in their liturgies and the aestheticism of the Kaula mystical cults, which saw enlightenment not in withdrawal from extroverted cognition but in its contemplation as the spontaneous radiance of the self.

Abhinavagupta profoundly influenced the subsequent history of Śaivism in Kashmir, both directly and indirectly, through the simpler and more formulaic works of popularization produced by his pupil Kṣemarāja. The nondualistic doctrine that they expounded permanently colonized the cult of Svacchandabhairava, which was the basic Śaivism of the valley of Kashmir, and later it formed the basis of the Kashmirian cult of the goddess Tripurasundarī. This influence was not confined to Kashmir: Abhinavagupta's lineage established this tradition in Tamil Nadu, particularly at the great Śaiva center of Cidambaram, propagating the belief that Abhinavagupta was no mortal but an incarnation of Śiva himself. Many Sanskrit works by Tamils on the Trika, Krama, Pratyabhijñā, and Śrīvidyā (e.g. Kṛṣṇadāsa's *Śivasūtravārttika* and *Parātrimśikālaghuvṛttivimarśinī*, the anonymous *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinīvyākhyā*, Maheśvarānanda's *Mahārthamañjarīparimala*, Tejānandanātha's *Ānandakalpalatikā*, Śivānanda's *Nityāṣoḍaśikārṇava-rjuvimarśinī*, Amṛtānanda's *Yoginīhṛdayadīpikā*, and Śrīnivāsa's *Tripurārahasyajñānakhaṇḍavyākhyā)* maintained this tradition from the eleventh to the nineteenth century. Outside the Tantric Śaiva milieu the works of Abhinavagupta and Kṣemarāja provided the metaphysical infrastructure of the *Ahirbudhnya Saṃhitā* and *Lakṣmī Tantra* of the Pañcarātra Vaiṣṇavas and inspired the Śaiva Vedānta of Śrīkaṇṭha, devotee of Śiva at Cidambaram.

[*See also* Śaivism, *especially the articles on* Śaivism in Kashmir; Pratyabhijñā; Trika Śaivism; *and* Krama Śaivism.]

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ALEXIS SANDERSON

ABLUTIONS are ceremonial washings of the human body or particular parts of it; of objects that come into close contact with the human body, such as cooking utensils or food; and sometimes of such special religious items as statues of deities or saints. Ablutions can be performed through washing with water, through immersion, or through sprinkling. Instead of pure water, water mixed with salt, cow dung, sand, or urine can be used. Ablutions are symbolic actions meant not to create physical cleanness but to remove ritual uncleanness or pollution. [*See* Purification.] Therefore, they should be interpreted not as forms of magical belief, manifestations of primitive hygiene, or expressions of savage psychology but above all as ritual acts performed to create order and abolish disorder in social reality.

Ablutions and related symbolic behaviors are carried out in societies that are characterized by well-defined and clearly marked distinctions between the phases of human life, ranging from birth through puberty and marriage to death. Ablutions are performed as well in relation to the different social roles of the sexes and to the various roles that a person can play in society. Carried out at transitional stages, ablutions are ritual and symbolic actions designed to avert the dangers inherent in those particular stages, where social forms are fluid. Ablutions mark transitions from one phase to another or from one area of society to another. They therefore belong, at least in part, to the category of rites of passage. [*See* Rites of Passage.]

Ablutions that mark the transition from the profane sector of society to the sacred one are well known. The Babylonian high priest performed ablutions in water from the Tigris or the Euphrates before he carried out his daily functions. For ablutions and ritual sprinklings a special building, the *bitrimki* ("washing house"), was

constructed next to the priest's house or the temple. There, the life-giving water from *apsu* (the primeval deep of sweet waters) was used for all kinds of ablutions. Water, the creative element *par excellence*, was used to create order wherever and whenever this order was threatened, intentionally or not. In traditional Chinese religion, preparation for a sacrificial ceremony occupied three days and involved bathing and wearing of clean raiment. Before the pharaoh in ancient Egypt could participate in any religious ceremony his body had to be purified by a sprinkling with water and natron. The water, called "water of life and good fortune," was brought from the sacred pool that belonged to every Egyptian temple. The priests of Israel were subjected to very strict rules of purity (*Lv.* 21:22) and were not permitted to eat of the holy offerings unless they had washed their whole body with water (*Lv.* 22:6). Before entering the temple to perform their duties, priests in Israel had to wash their hands and feet in the "laver of brass . . . that they die not" (*Ex.* 30:17 ff.). Similar rites are observed in other religions.

Islam, a religion without a true priesthood, requires every believer to wash before the act of prayer (*ṣalāt*, performed five times a day facing toward Mecca) according to the prescriptions of the Qur'ān: "O believers, when ye come to fulfill the prayer, wash your faces, and your hands as far as the elbows; and rub your heads, and your feet unto the ankles, and if ye be polluted then purify yourselves" (5:9). Surah 4:46 allows the use of sand instead of water: "Wash yourselves; but if you be sick, or upon a journey, or one of you come from the privy or have touched a woman, and ye find no water, then take pure earth and rub your faces and hands therewith." This ritual ablution is performed at a tank or a reservoir provided with spouts that is to be found in or near the courtyard of every mosque. The water must be pure; therefore, rainwater is preferred, although water from other sources may be used. The rite is elaborately described in the *ḥadīth*. Muḥammad derived this purificatory rite, like other elements of Islam, from Jewish and Christian sources. In the latter religion the use of water for purificatory purposes, in particular by a person entering a church or by a priest before the beginning of mass, is another example of a partial ablution in the transition from profane to sacred territory.

As human beings undergo ablution before contact with the sacred, so the gods sometimes wash before exposure to ordinary people. In the highly elaborate daily ritual of an Egyptian temple, the cult statue was purified with water, natron, and incense every morning. In Indian Jainism the statues representing the gods are bathed every morning, and a man can worship in a temple only after he has taken a bath and donned clean clothes. Even offerings are ritually purified with water before they are presented to the gods. In ancient Egypt this was accomplished by pouring libations over them. The *Records of the Ritual and Music of the Holy Temple of Chinese Confucianism*, the latest edition of which was published in 1887, gives exact rules for purificatory rites in the Confucian ceremonial. Fifteen days before the sacrificial ceremony, the custodian of the temple and his assistants go to a park in which animals are kept and select unblemished ones. These animals are ceremonially washed with warm water that day and every day thereafter until the time for the sacrifice arrives. In all of the instances mentioned, ablution is not a removal of uncleanness or dirt but a symbolic action performed by man in order to prepare himself for and adapt himself to the crossing of a sociocultural frontier. The transition between two social forms is an ambiguous event, therefore unclean and in need of purification.

Where social forms have been attacked, pollution looms, and purification, often in the form of ablution, is requisite. Ablution is consequently often a set element in puberty rites, in which the transition from childhood to full adult life is symbolically performed and marked. On the Fiji Islands, at the close of the ceremonies for entering adulthood all the initiates went to the river and washed off the black paint (the color of death) with which they had been smeared. Ablution is here the mark of entering a new phase of life, a kind of death-and-renewal ritual. The Thonga nubility customs for girls required a period of seclusion at the appearance of the menses. Girls undergoing this transition were covered each morning with a cloth and led to a pool in which they were immersed to the neck. Afterward they were imprisoned in a hut, where they received instruction about the behavior and duties of a grown woman. Thonga boys likewise experienced a period of seclusion during which they received instruction and were smeared with white paint or white clay as a sign that they had abandoned the darkness of childhood. At the end of their period of seclusion, all the paraphernalia of the school were destroyed, and the boys were led to a stream, where they washed off the white, cut their hair, and put on new clothes.

The initiation rite is a symbolic death and revival often expressed through immersion in water. [*See* Baptism.] Jewish proselytes, for example, had to undergo immersion before entering their new life as believing Jews. In the same way, Christian baptism is an initiation rite incorporating all the symbolism of death and resurrection to mark the transition from the world to the church, from sin to grace, from the polluted earth to the pure kingdom of God.

Childbirth and death, entrance to and departure from

the world of the living, are fundamental transitory phases, and therefore dangerous. [*See* Birth *and* Death.] In many cultures, the period after childbirth is one of uncleanness for women, in which they may pollute those, particularly men, who come into contact with them. Therefore, they must be ritually purified (i.e., must perform ablutions) before they regain their normal state and can return to their normal tasks. Among the Inuit (Eskimo) a pregnant woman is separated from her husband and must leave her usual dwelling place since she may otherwise pollute the food. Immediately after the birth she must wash from head to foot, and after the first night following the birth she must make herself new clothes. Following this she is readmitted into society. In ancient Egypt the same customs were followed. During and after childbirth, women usually remained secluded in a special house, called the "birth-house" or "house of purification," where for fourteen days they purified themselves through ablutions and fumigation with incense. When this purification was complete, they could resume their household duties. Judaism still has very strict rules for the purification of women after childbirth, detailed in *Leviticus* 12:1–8. The period of uncleanness varies according to whether a boy or a girl is born. After the birth of a boy the period of uncleanness is forty days; after that of a girl this period is doubled. During these days "she [the mother] shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary." At the expiration of the period of uncleanness she has to offer a lamb and a young pigeon or turtledove.

Contact with a corpse also requires purificatory ablutions, in particular for those persons who handle the body, prepare the grave, and take care of the burial. Their activities are situated in the intermediary zone between death and life and are, therefore, especially dangerous and polluting. Among Indian tribes of the Northwest Coast of North America, the duty of disposing of the body is performed by gravediggers (never members of the family) who thus become unclean and, in addition to following special restrictions regarding food and sexual relations, must undergo ablutions. Among the Thonga the men who dig the grave—again, a task not performed by relatives—must undergo a rite of ablution after the burial and, with their wives, are subjected to steam baths. These men and women use special spoons for five days and are not allowed to eat from the common plate. The purification is extended even to the hut in which a person dies. Among the Thompson Indians the hut in which a death takes place is washed with water.

Often widows and widowers share in the pollution that death causes. Among the various tribes of the Dene

and Salish, for example, widows are regarded as particularly unclean. They must retire to the woods for a year, performing purificatory rites, bathing in streams, and taking sweat-baths. Participants in the worship of ancestors are often required to undergo purification rites, since they can be regarded as having had special contact with the dead. In China both husband and wife have to hold vigil, observe fasting regulations, and wash their heads and bodies before bringing a sacrifice to the ancestors. In ancient Egypt, frequent ablutions were part of a ritual performed by the dead or by the gods to secure entrance into a new life. In the "place of purification" (i.e., the embalmer's workshop), the dead body was washed with water and other liquids in order to preserve its integrity in the intermediary state between old and new life. The extensive and complicated purificatory rules of ancient Israel included the prescript that "every soul that eateth that which died of itself, or that which was torn with beasts, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even" (*Lv.* 17:15).

Among the Amba in East Africa the funeral almost always occurs on the same day a person dies and is usually not performed by close relatives of the dead. The first ceremony after death is the most important mortuary rite. At dawn on the morning of the fourth day after the death all the men and women of the residential group take a bath and, after bathing, shave their heads. Following that, a long mortuary ceremony starts. Ablution and shaving are necessary to undo the dangers and the pollution that are inherent in the sphere between life and death.

Marriage is another rite of passage and, therefore, ablution rites often belong to its preliminaries. In Attica, in Classical Greece, the bride was purified by ablution with water from the sacred spring in preparation for the marriage ceremony. In the southern Celebes the bridegroom bathes in holy water, whereas the bride is fumigated. In all Muslim countries purifying the bride with water and painting her with henna are the most important preliminaries to the wedding rite. The bath usually takes place a day or two before the bride's departure for the groom's house.

Extensive ablutions remain an essential part of the highly ritualistic life of the Mandaeans, a gnostic sect that dates back to antiquity and whose present adherents live in Baghdad and in some regions in southern Iraq. Ablution undoes the pollution that is considered to manifest itself in various marginal situations in Mandaean social life. As all powers that are part of a given social system express it, so powers of pollution are inherent in the structure of ideas. To understand the func-

tion of ablutions in such societies a definition of pollution is requisite. It is a punishment or "a symbolic breaking of that which should be joined or joining of that which should be separate" (Douglas, 1966, p. 113). Concepts of pollution and ablution rites occur, therefore, only in cultures in which social and cosmic lines of structure are clearly defined and strictly maintained.

The Mandaeans are bearers of such a culture, which they, as a minority group, try by all means to keep intact. Since the human body functions as a symbol of society, the boundaries of the physical body symbolize those of the body social. Especially among minorities, rituals give expression to a deep anxiety about the body's refuse; this symbolizes a care to protect the unity of the group and its well-defined confines. The same phenomenon can be detected in the many purificatory rules of the ancient Israelites, also a religious minority. The Mandaeans follow an elaborate system of ablutions, in particular for birth, marriage, sexual contact, and death, that is, aspects of human life in which the orifices of the body are clearly important or bodily boundaries are transgressed. Birth, death, marriage, and coition pollute those involved, who are then segregated from their fellows until they have been purified through ablution, in this case, by immersion in living water. When the time of her giving birth approaches, a woman washes herself and prepares a place apart from the household. As soon as the child has come into the world, the midwife washes it, and the mother has to immerse herself three times in the river. The woman remains segregated for a time, and even pots and plates used by her receive ritual ablution. Mother and child have to undergo several ablutions and immersions before they can reenter normal life. If during these rites, which take place in the open air and in the often cold water of the river, the child soils or wets the clothing of the serving priest, the priest continues the ceremony as though nothing has happened. However, he must afterward go through a complete ablution at the hands of another priest. It often happens that during this rigorous ordeal the newborn baby dies. The ceremony is then continued with a dummy of dough in the place of the child in order to ensure the safe journey of the dead baby's soul to the world of light. The officiating priest, however, becomes defiled through contact with the dead and must undergo triple immersion and be provided with new clothes and new priestly paraphernalia before he is allowed to resume his duties. This illustrates the polluting power of the dead. A dying man is not permitted to die in his lay clothes. As death approaches, water is brought from the river, the sick man's clothes are removed, and he is doused three times from head to foot. Then he is lifted, placed on

clean bedding facing the North Star, and clothed in new ceremonial dress. In this way the dying man is given his place in the cosmic order and crosses the border between life and death. Needless to say, the actual funeral is accompanied by the elaborate ablution of attendants and cult objects.

At marriage, the bride and bridegroom must undergo two immersions in water in the ceremonial cult hut, or *mandi;* they are then given new ceremonial dresses. The wedding ceremony has a clear cosmic symbolism that relates the social order to the cosmic one. Immersions and ablutions are an element of daily Mandaean practice that gives protection and the promise of everlasting life, since water is the life fluid *par excellence.* Immersions and ablutions are also purificatory, undoing the pollution in marginal situations. The Mandaeans perform three kinds of ceremonial ablutions. The first is enacted by each Mandaean individually and daily just before sunrise, in other words, at the border between dark and light. The second ablution is a triple immersion in the river, done by a woman after menstruation and after childbirth, after touching a dead body, after coition, after nocturnal pollution, or after contact with a defiled person, since impurity is contagious. The third ablution, called *masbuta* ("baptism"), is performed by a priest and should take place every Sunday after major defilements. Not only the human body and its orifices but also vegetables and food need ablution and are, therefore, three times immersed in the river before being eaten. Pots and pans must at certain times be baptized, too. The ritual cleaning of food by immersion was also practiced in the Christian community of Elkesaite baptists in which Mani, the founder of Manichaeism, grew up. This ablution was a main point of controversy between Mani and other members of the sect, however, since Mani wished to emphasize not ritual cleaning but purity through asceticism. Food, in particular, enters the body by being eaten, and, therefore, ritual cleanness of food is especially important among minority groups, for whom the external borders of the social system are under constant pressure. The Israelites, the Mandaeans, and the Hindus provide examples of such purity and ablution systems. Hindu society consists of a range of castes, or cultural subunits, between which strict borderlines are maintained through purity rules, since each caste is like a minority group in relation to the whole. The higher the caste, the purer it must be. The body social is, therefore, like a human body: the high castes do the mental work; the lowest castes cut hair, carry away waste matter, and bury corpses. But the object of these purity rules is not one of hygiene but to keep the social system clean. Because belonging to a certain caste and, consequently, to a cer-

tain place in the hierarchy of purity is biologically determined, sexual purity, in particular of women, is strictly guarded. After sexual contact a woman has to perform ablutions. The most effective ritual purification is a bath in the Ganges (though the Ganges is one of the dirtiest rivers in the world!) or in another *tīrtha* ("ford"). In this context ablutions and immersions are clearly not hygienic activities; rather, they are ritual manipulations of the human body that symbolize social cleanness, which maintains the various social boundary lines.

[*See also* Water.]

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HAN J. W. DRIJVERS

ABORIGINAL RELIGIONS. *See* Australian Religions.

ABRAHAM, or, in Hebrew, Avraham; the ancestor of the Hebrews through the line of Isaac and Jacob and of the Arabs through Ishmael.

Abraham in the World of the Near East. The ancestors of Israel are portrayed in the Bible as living a nomadic or pastoral life among the older population of Palestine before the time of the Israelite settlement (c. thirteenth century BCE). With the great increase in knowledge about the ancient Near East during the past century, scholars have attempted to fit Abraham and his family into the background of Near Eastern culture in the second millennium BCE. Comparisons are made with

the personal names of the ancestors; the names of peoples and places; social customs having to do with marriage, childbearing, and inheritance rights; and types of nomadism in the various stories in order to establish the background and social milieu out of which the ancestors came. The effort to place the patriarchs in the second millennium BCE has been unsuccessful, however, because all of the features in the stories can be attested to in sources of the first millennium BCE, and some of the items in the stories, such as the domestication of the camel or reference to Philistines, Aramaeans, and Arabs, belong to a much later time. The special effort to fit the war between Abraham and the kings of the east (*Gn.* 14) into the history of the second millennium by trying to identify the various kings and nations involved has failed to yield plausible proposals. The four eastern kingdoms, Elam, Babylonia, Assyria, and that of the Hittites, referred to cryptically in this text, never formed an alliance, nor did they ever control Palestine either collectively or individually during the second millennium BCE. The whole account is historically impossible, and the story is very likely a late addition to *Genesis.*

Abraham and Tradition-history. Another method of approaching the Abraham stories is through tradition-history, which attempts to identify the individual stories as legends ("sagas") and to regard them as separate units of tradition with their original setting in the nomadic life of the tribes during their earliest contacts with the indigenous population. The common concern of a number of the stories is the quest for land and progeny, which reflects the urge of the land-hungry nomads to gain a foothold in the land where they had temporary pasturage. The stories thus portray a process of gradual peaceful settlement by separate groups, each represented by a different patriarch. The combination of the traditions reflects the subsequent amalgamation of the groups with their traditions, which led to the creation of the genealogical chain of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This whole process of tradition development is viewed as taking place at the oral tradition stage, before it reached the written form.

This approach has not gone unchallenged (Van Seters, 1975). The degree to which the stories of Abraham reflect a long process of oral tradition is debatable. For instance, the tradition of Beersheba as a cult place cannot belong to the premonarchy period because the excavations carried out under the direction of Yohanan Aharoni show that the city was a new foundation of the Judean monarchy. While some of the individual stories may reflect traditions of varying degrees of antiquity, the process of collecting and arranging the stories is still best explained as reflecting literary activity.

Religion of Abraham. The traditio-historical approach to the patriarchal stories has led to the view that the tradition reflects a nomadic form of personal religion in which the "god of the fathers" is the patron god of the clan. He is associated with a specific person, such as Abraham, who experiences a theophany and receives the divine promises of land and progeny. Also belonging to this "primitive" level of Israelite religion are the references to sacred trees and stones and the setting up of numerous altars. The frequent references to El in the patriarchal stories reflect either the encounter of the nomadic religion with the Canaanite religion of the land, with its high god El, or the original identity of the "god of the fathers."

The problem with these reconstructions of Israel's early religion is that the emphasis upon Yahveh as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the identifying of Yahveh with El are attested only in exilic sources. Furthermore, the themes of the divine promise of land and numerous progeny cannot be shown in a single instance to belong to the oral stage of the tradition's development. One must conclude therefore that the religion of Abraham is the religion of the authors of the present form of the tradition.

Abraham in the Written Sources. Scholars have long recognized that the story of Abraham is not a unity but combines the works of more than one author. The literary analysis of the Pentateuch, established by Julius Wellhausen and others in the nineteenth century, recognizes three independent sources. The earliest of these, the Yahvist (J), is dated to the united monarchy (c. 950 BCE) and is viewed as using the Abraham tradition to support the claims of the Davidic empire. The Elohist (E) in *Genesis* 20–22 is dated to the time of the prophets (c. eighth century BCE). The Priestly (P) source is of postexilic date (c. 400 BCE) and is found only in the episodes of *Genesis* 17 and 23 and in a few chronological notices.

While this literary analysis has long held sway, some scholars have begun to dispute the dates given to the sources and to understand their relationship to each other in quite a different way. In this view some of the early J stories (*Gn.* 12:10–20, 16, 18:1, 18:10–14, 21:2, 21:6–7) and the so-called E source were used by the J author along with his own material to shape the biblical story of Abraham as a major national tradition in the exilic period. The P writer made a few additions to this tradition in the postexilic period, while the story about the kings of the east in *Genesis* 14 was the latest addition in the Hellenistic period.

The Abraham Tradition in Genesis. A distinctive feature of the Abraham tradition is that it contains a number of short stories that are not linked in a continuous narrative. This has fostered the view that they reflect a stage of oral tradition before their collection into a literary work. Furthermore, the fact that a number of stories appear as doublets has suggested that tradition variants found their way into separate literary sources. The doublets, however, are actually carefully composed literary modifications of the earlier stories meant to put forward the author's own point of view and religious concerns.

The twice-told tales. There are two stories about how the patriarch's wife was passed off as his sister in order to protect himself in a foreign land. The first one (*Gn.* 12:10–20) is simply an entertaining folk tale whereby Abraham appears to outsmart the Egyptians and come away with both wealth and wife. The second version (chap. 20) seeks to exonerate the patriarch of any moral wrongdoing. Abraham did not lie, because Sarah actually was his half sister, and God was not unjust in his treatment of the king but actually recognized his innocence and provided him with a way out of his dilemma. The whole matter is resolved amicably. Yet a third version of the story is found in the Isaac tradition (26:1–11), which makes use of elements from both of the earlier stories but with the emphasis here on God's guidance and providence. The account of Hagar's flight (chap. 16) and her later expulsion with Ishmael (21:8–21) are also doublets. The first is an ethnographic etiology on the origin and nature of the Ishmaelites, while the second transforms this theme into an aspect of the divine promises to Abraham, since Ishmael is also his offspring.

In none of these cases does the later version constitute an independent variant of the tradition. Instead, it is an attempt by a later author to modify the way one understands the earlier story in terms of a later attitude on morals and piety, as in the case of *Genesis* 20, or a later use of the Abraham tradition to emphasize ethnic identity and destiny.

Abraham and Lot. The inclusion of Lot in the Abraham tradition affords a contrast between the forefather of the Ammonites and the Moabites and the forefather of the Hebrews. When they go their separate ways (*Gn.* 13), Lot appears to gain the better territory by his choice of the fertile valley in the region of Sodom, while Abraham is left with the land of Canaan. But this merely anticipates the story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (chaps. 18–19) and Lot's ultimate location in the eastern highlands.

The story of Sodom and Gomorrah follows a familiar classical theme, as in the story of Baucis and Philemon (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 8.616ff.), in which the gods send emissaries in the guise of strangers to investigate violence and corruption on earth. The strangers are ill

treated by the population, except for an old couple who offer them hospitality and are rewarded while the rest of the population is destroyed. In the Bible, Abraham's hospitality is rewarded by the promise of Isaac's birth (18:1–15). Lot also entertains the two angels and protects them from the cities' inhabitants, who try to abuse them. This leads to the judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah, but Lot and his family are rescued, except for Lot's wife, who looks back and becomes a pillar of salt. The story also serves as the context for a discussion of the possible fate of the righteous along with sinners when God makes a judgment upon the wicked (18:16–33).

Abraham and Isaac. The account of Isaac's birth (*Gn.* 18:1, 18:10–14, 21:2, 21:6–7) was originally told as a single story quite separate from the story of Sodom and Gomorrah with which it is now combined. It emphasized the wonder of the birth of the child to the aged couple and played upon the meaning of Isaac's name, "laughter." The *'aqedah*, or "binding," of Isaac (chap. 22) became very important in the later development of the tradition. The frequent suggestion that the story arose as a protest against child sacrifice is speculative and has little support in the present text. The author makes clear at the outset that the command to sacrifice Isaac is a divine testing. While the sacrifice is stayed by divine intervention and a ram substituted in Isaac's place, Abraham's obedience is commended and the divine promises renewed. The matchmaking of chapter 24 recounts how Abraham sent his servant to Harran, the land of his kinsmen, to find a wife for Isaac, and how through divine guidance the servant was led to the house of Rebecca. The story stresses the providence of God in the destiny of Abraham's descendants. It also raises the theme of ethnic purity—a matter of some concern in the exilic period.

Covenant of Abraham. The Yahvist who brought together the diverse elements of the Abraham tradition created a sense of unity in the collection by means of the themes of the divine promises of numerous progeny and the gift of the land of Canaan. J begins with God's call to Abraham to leave his homeland for a new land and his promise of nationhood and divine blessing (*Gn.* 12:1–3). As soon as Abraham reaches the land of Canaan, God gives it to him as an inheritance (12:7). The promises are again repeated after Abraham's separation from Lot (13:14–17). The promise theme reaches its climax in chapter 15, in which God assures Abraham again of numerous descendants and makes a covenant with him according to which he gives him the region from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates. Thereafter the promises are again mentioned in a number of other stories about Abraham (16:10, 18:18, 21:13, 21:18, 22:15–

18, 24:7) as well as in those of Isaac and Jacob. Unlike the covenant of Sinai, the Abrahamic covenant is not conditioned by law since the promises have already been guaranteed by Abraham's obedience (22:15–18, 26:3–5).

The Priestly writer's treatment of the covenant (chap. 17) builds directly upon J's version but introduces a number of modifications. First, God appears to Abraham as El Shaddai (17:1) instead of as Yahveh (15:7). This change is explained by P in *Exodus* 6:2–3 in the suggestion that the patriarchs knew God only by the name El Shaddai, whereas the name Yahveh was first revealed to Moses. Second, the writer marks the covenant by a change of names from Abram and Sarai to Abraham and Sarah and modifies the tradition accordingly. Third, the covenant with its promises includes the sign of circumcision. Only through this rite may Israelites of a later day be participants in the destiny of the covenant community. This is an ecclesial conception of identity most appropriate to those living in the Diaspora communities.

Burial of Sarah. In the account of Sarah's burial in chapter 23 (P), Abraham is portrayed as striking a bargain with the inhabitants of Hebron to purchase a piece of land and a cave in which to bury his wife. This becomes the special burial site for Abraham himself and for most of the other patriarchs. What is remarkable about the account is its lack of any religious treatment of the burial or of any reference to the deity in the story. The author's intention may have been to frustrate any ancestral veneration by such a "secular" account, but if so, it was not successful since the supposed location of the burial site in Hebron is regarded as a holy place by Jews, Christians, and Muslims down to the present day.

Abraham in Other Books of the Bible. In the Pentateuch and the historical books mention is made of the promises to the patriarchs as the basis for God's mercy toward Israel in his rescue of the people from Egypt, in his forgiveness of their disobedience in the wilderness, in his gift to them of the land of Canaan, and finally in his rescue of Israel from Aramaean domination. Abraham is not mentioned in preexilic prophecy. It is only with the crisis of the exile that the figure of Abraham becomes a paradigm of hope for the restoration of nationhood and Israel's return to the land of its forefathers. It is especially in "Second Isaiah" (*Is.* 41:8–10, 51:1–2) that Abraham is the focus of Israelite identity and destiny. So too in the exilic Psalm 105 Israel's identity is based upon the election and covenant of Abraham. The Sinai covenant is passed over in silence.

Abraham in Postbiblical Judaism. One use of the Abraham tradition in postbiblical times can be seen in the anti-Hellenistic work of the Maccabean period

known as *Jubilees,* or the *Little Genesis* (chaps. 12–23). There Abraham becomes the model of appropriate Jewish piety. The book tells how Abraham, while still in Chaldea, came to a knowledge of the true God, learned the divine language of Hebrew, and repudiated the idolatry of his native land. After receiving the divine call he went to the land of Canaan. One significant amplification of the biblical tradition of Abraham is the emphasis on Abraham's observance of many of the Mosaic laws and of his giving instruction in these laws to Isaac his son and even to his grandson Jacob. Special emphasis is also given to the covenant of Abraham as the covenant of circumcision and a warning to those Jews who neglect this practice (see 15:9–14, 15:25–34, 16:14). The theme of Abraham's testing by God is more nearly paralleled to that of Job by including in the Abraham story the figure of Mastema (Satan), who becomes responsible for instigating the trials. Abraham endures ten trials, the climax of which is the divine command to sacrifice Isaac (17:15–18, 18:1–13; see also *Avot* 5.3, *Judith* 8:25f.).

Josephus Flavius, the Jewish historian of Roman times who was writing for a gentile audience, presents Abraham in a much more apologetic tone—as a pious philosopher of great learning (*Jewish Antiquities* 1.7–17). He states that Abraham was the first to reason to a knowledge of God, creator of the universe, by his observations of the heavens. Abraham was, however, forced to leave Babylonia because of religious persecution (see also *Judith* 5:8). He took with him the Babylonian sciences of astronomy and mathematics, which he taught to the Egyptians during his sojourn in their country, and in this way the knowledge of such sciences eventually came to the Greeks. (See also the Hellenistic-Jewish fragments in Eusebius's *Praeparatio evangelica,* 9.17ff., where Abraham teaches the Phoenicians as well.) Josephus places little emphasis upon the distinctively Jewish features of the Abraham tradition. He even passes rather lightly over the episode of his circumcision and defers to another place a discussion of the law of circumcision.

Philo Judaeus of Alexandria devotes two treatises to Abraham: *On Abraham,* part of his *Exposition of the Law* (directed to gentiles), and *On the Migration of Abraham,* part of his *Allegory of the Jewish Law* (directed to Jewish readers). The first work is primarily a Hellenistic biography to demonstrate Abraham's piety and wisdom and the Greek virtues of justice, courage, and moderation, to which, in place of prudence, the author adds faith. Abraham also observes the law, not, however, the Law of Moses (as in *Jubilees*) but the law of nature. The life of Abraham is further interpreted allegorically, especially in the second work, as the mystical journey of the sage who reaches perfection through education. From Chaldean idolatry, astrology, and sense perception the soul progresses through reason and philosophy to a knowledge of God. The outlook here is a form of moral and mystical Greek philosophy.

The rabbinic *aggadah* on Abraham is well represented by the *midrash Genesis Rabbah,* 39–62. For the rabbis, also, Abraham was the first man to recognize the existence of God while in Chaldea amongst the idolatry there. Abraham's call to go to an unknown land was the beginning of his trials of faith, of which the binding of Isaac was the climax and by which his rewards, blessing, and merit on behalf of others would be all the greater. The rabbinic tradition is very insistent that Abraham kept all the Mosaic commandments, both the written and unwritten law (see also B.T., *Yoma'* 28b; B.T., *Qiddushin* 82a; *Midrash Tehillim* 112; *Numbers Rabbah* 12). Abraham is also viewed as a prophet, primarily in the sense that he received revelations from God about the future and the unseen world. And Abraham is a priest whose priesthood is somehow linked with that of Melchizedek and whose sacrifice on Mount Moriah was at the site of the future Temple.

Abraham in Christianity. The figure of Abraham plays a special role in the New Testament, especially in the thought of the apostle Paul. In *Romans* 4 Paul argues that Abraham was justified by faith in God prior to his being circumcised and therefore prior to any works of the law, so the law is not necessary for justification—that is, for being considered righteous before God. Abraham becomes the father of the faithful, and the election of Abraham is thus extended to all who have faith. Nevertheless, Paul is not willing to give up God's special election of the Jews and so argues for their ultimate salvation as well. In *Galatians* 3:6–9 and 3:15–18 Paul uses a somewhat different argument by suggesting that salvation came to the gentiles through Abraham's blessing; this blessing was transmitted through Abraham's "seed," which Paul identifies with Jesus.

The *Letter to the Hebrews* (11:8–12, 11:17–19) uses Abraham as an example of faith, recounting his response to God's call to sojourn in the land of promise, his belief with Sarah in the promise of offspring, and his testing through the sacrifice of Isaac. All of these are made to reflect faith in God beyond the limitations of this life, a heavenly abode, and the belief in future resurrection of the dead. By contrast, *James* 2:20–24 uses the sacrifice of Isaac as an example of Abraham's being justified by works and not just by faith alone.

Abraham in Islam. Abraham is mentioned more frequently in the Qur'ān than is any other biblical figure. He is regarded as the first prophet because he was the

first to convert to the true God and to preach against the idolatry of his people (surahs 19:41ff., 21:51ff., 26:69ff., 37:83ff.). He was also the first Muslim because he practiced *islām*—submission to absolute obedience to God—when he was tested by the command to sacrifice his son (2:124ff., 37:102ff.). Abraham, with the aid of his son Ishmael, the father of the Arabs, was responsible for the founding of the Ka'bah in Mecca, the first sanctuary of God (2:125, 2:127). Muḥammad viewed himself as the reviver of this ancient faith, which he regarded as older than both Judaism and Christianity (3:65). Following Jewish tradition, he also regarded Abraham as the first recipient of the divine revelation of the book (2:129).

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JOHN VAN SETERS

ABRAHAM BEN DAVID OF POSQUIÈRES.
See Avraham ben David of Posquières.

ABRAVANEL, ISAAC

ABRAVANEL, ISAAC (1437–1508), known as Abravanel, Abrabanel, and Abarbanel; Spanish-Portuguese biblical commentator, theologian, and philosopher. Born in Lisbon into a wealthy Jewish family from Seville, Isaac ben Judah Abravanel succeeded his father as the treasurer to Alfonso V, king of Aragon, but in 1483 for political reasons he had to flee to Castille, where he remained in the service of Ferdinand and Isabella until the expulsion of the Jews on 31 May 1492. He then moved to Naples in the service of King Ferrante I until a French invasion forced him to flee with the king to Messina in 1494. Isaac resided in Corfu until 1496, then moved to Monopoli (Apulia), and in 1503 settled in Venice, where he spent the last years of his life.

Isaac's earliest work, composed when he was in his teens, was *Tsurot ha-yesodot* (Forms of the Elements). His next, completed around 1465, was 'Ateret zeqenim (Crown of the Ancients). The first deals with ontology; the second covers divine providence and the nature of prophecy. Between 1483 and 1505 Isaac wrote commentaries on the Pentateuch, *Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel*, and the twelve Minor Prophets. In 1496 he completed a commentary on *Deuteronomy* entitled *Mirkevet ha-mishneh* (The Second Chariot); another on the Passover Haggadah, *Zevaḥ pesaḥ* (The Sacrifice of Passover); and a third on the tractate *Avot* in the Mishnah, *Naḥalot avot* (Paternal Inheritance).

Between 1496 and 1498 Isaac composed a set of three books known as "The Tower of Salvation." The first, *Ma'yenei ha-yeshu'ah* (The Fountains of Salvation), is a commentary on the *Book of Daniel*. The second, *Yeshu'ot meshiḥo* (The Salvation of His Anointed), is a study of *midrashim* and passages from the Talmud that deal with the Messiah and the messianic age. The third, *Mashmi'a yeshu'ah* (Announcing Salvation), is a commentary on the messianic prophecies found in all of the books of the prophets.

Isaac wrote three books that deal specifically with the philosophy of Maimonides (Mosheh ben Maimon, 1135/8–1204): *Ro'sh amanah* (The Principles of Faith; 1494), a detailed commentary (1505) on Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed*, and the *Ma'amar qatser* (Short Treatise; 1505), which discusses at length what Isaac considered to be the most difficult problems in the *Guide*. In 1505 Isaac also completed two works on creation, *Shamayim ḥadashim* (The New Heavens) and *Mif'alot Elohim* (The Works of God).

Isaac's last written works were answers to questions raised by Sha'ul ha-Kohen of Candia. These *responsa* refer to two lost books: *The Inheritance of the Prophets*, an essay against Maimonides' theory of prophecy, and *The Justice of the Universe*, which deals with divine providence.

The dominant theme of Isaac's writings is his opposition to what he considered to be the excessive rationalism of the Jewish Aristotelians who followed Maimonides, particularly Gersonides (Levi ben Gershom). Isaac was motivated by the fear that this kind of sophisticated Jewish thought, given the threats to Jewish survival present in the exile, would undermine the faith of the simple Jew. Isaac rejected the claims of both Hasdai Crescas and Yosef Albo that it is possible to single out fundamental principles of Judaism. Isaac argued that Judaism has no conceptual axioms; every law and every belief in the Torah is equally fundamental.

Isaac opposed naturalistic interpretations of prophecy. He argued that all prophecy is produced directly by God and that the events reported in prophetic visions actually occurred in the physical world. Furthermore, prophetic knowledge differs qualitatively from natural knowledge. Natural knowledge at best yields claims that are merely probable, whereas revealed knowledge is necessarily true.

Isaac drew his political theory from the political structures of ancient Rome, the Venice of his day, and the Torah. He claimed that a political state is required only because of the human imperfection that resulted from the sin of Adam. Consequently, no political state is perfect. The best political order is that of theocracy; the next best is a monarchy, limited by the national laws of a superior court or Sanhedrin and the local laws of elected municipal lower courts.

Two cosmological judgments underlie Isaac's view of history. One is his rejection of the Aristotelian conception of the spheres as living entities. The other is his affirmation of a literal understanding of the doctrine of creation out of nothing. What philosophers mistakenly believe to be natural law is God's will made manifest through the actions of angels (God's agents for rewarding human beings) and demons (God's agents for punishing human beings), and/or the willed choices of human beings. Nothing occurs through impersonal, natural forces.

Isaac pictured the course of human history as a circle that began when humanity separated from God and that will end when humanity returns to God. However, after Adam's initial fall that began history, there was, is, and will be continuous disintegration until the messianic age. The penultimate stage of history will begin when a revived Muslim empire in alliance with the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel will conquer the Christians and retake possession of Jerusalem. Next, the Messiah, who is not Jesus of Nazareth, will appear, and the Muslims will turn over Jerusalem to him. At that time all of the Jewish people will return to the Land of Israel, and the Messiah will rule the world. Then a reign will follow during which humanity will progressively improve until, in the end, the physical, human world will give way to a spiritual world of pure souls who eternally will contemplate God's essence. The two dates that Isaac cited for the coming of the Messiah are 1503 and 1531. [*See* Messianism, *article on* Jewish Messianism.]

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ABSTINENCE. *See* Asceticism; Celibacy; Fasting; Silence; *and* Spiritual Discipline.

ABŪ AL-HUDHAYL AL-ʿALLĀF (d. between AH 227 and 235, 842 and 850 CE), more fully Abū al-Hudhayl Muḥammad ibn al-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf al-ʿAbdī; Muslim theologian of the Muʿtazilī school. Little is known of the life of Abū al-Hudhayl. He was a client (*mawlā*) of the tribe ʿAbd al-Qays and is said to have studied with a certain Uthmān al-Tawīl, an agent for the Muʿtazilī propaganda of Wāṣil ibn ʿAṭāʾ (d. 748/9). About 819 he entered the court of the caliph al-

Ma'mūn, where he was renowned for his skill in disputation and for his ability to quote poetry. Of his numerous theological, philosophical, apologetic, and polemic writings, none has survived. He is reported to have been over a hundred years old at the time of his death.

The fragmentary and somewhat gnomic reports of Abū al-Hudhayl's doctrine supplied by later writers allow us only a superficial view of his teaching, nor is it possible to determine the significance of several apparent parallels to earlier Christian writers. His teaching is based on a systematic analysis of the predicates attached to things, where the primary assertion is indicated by the noun subject used in the analytic paraphrase. For example, "*x* moves" is analyzed as "a motion belongs to *x*," and "*y* knows," as "a cognition belongs to *y*." Since the subject term of the analysis is taken to designate an entity, the method tended to posit many reified properties, such as "location" (*kawn*), "conjunction," or "lifelessness." Abū al-Hudhayl's conception of material beings was atomistic: bodies are composites of discrete atoms (sg., *jawhar*) in each of which subsists a set of various entitative properties (sg., *ma'nā*), categorially referred to as "accidents." The atoms and some kinds of accidents perdure over many moments of time while other accidents exist only for a single instant. Since speech consists of accidents in a material substrate, the Qur'ān as God's speech is also created; it exists originally in a celestial archetype, "The Cherished Tablet," of which we have quotations.

Analyzing the descriptions of God given in the Qur'ān, Abū al-Hudhayl taught that God has cognition, power, life, eternity, grandeur, and so forth, but each of these attributes is God himself, even though they are distinguishable as such from each other. His volitions, however, come to exist temporally "in no substrate," simultaneously with his creation of their objects, as does his creative command, "Be," the reality of which is asserted by "creates." He held also that the potential objects of God's power are finite in number and that consequently there must come a time when even the activity of the blessed in Paradise will terminate in an unalterable state of bliss. This thesis he is said to have renounced late in his life.

Whether or not Abū al-Hudhayl first introduced atomism and the analytic method into the Mu'tazilī *kalām* is uncertain; in any event, Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī (d. 913) considers that it is Abū al-Hudhayl "who initiated *kalām*." His most important direct disciple was Abū Ya'qūb al-Shaḥḥām, who was in turn the master of al-Jubbā'ī. The latter basically refined the system of Abū al-Hudhayl so as to lay the immediate foundation of what later became the predominant tradition of Mu'tazilī theology. Also through al-Jubbā'ī, who was the teacher of al-

Ash'arī (d. 935), the teaching of Abū al-Hudhayl came to play a significant role in the formation of classical Ash'arī doctrine.

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R. M. FRANK

ABŪ ḤANĪFAH (AH 80?–150/699?–767 CE), more fully Abū Ḥanīfah al-Nu'mān ibn Thābit ibn Zūṭā; theologian, jurist, and founder of the first of the four orthodox schools of law in Sunnī Islam. As a theologian, he persuasively argued against Khārijī extremism and espoused several positions that became an integral part of orthodox doctrine, especially the idea that sin did not render one an unbeliever. As a jurist, he reviewed the then-existing body of legal doctrines, elaborated the law by formulating views on new questions, and integrated these into a coherent system by anchoring them to an elaborate and basically consistent legal theory.

Life. Abū Ḥanīfah was born in Kufa, then the capital of Iraq and a major intellectual center of the Islamic world. He was of non-Arab origin: his grandfather was a freed slave from Kabul who became a client (*mawlā*) of an Arabian tribe, Taym Allāh. His father, Thābit, was certainly a Muslim, and presumably even his grandfather had converted to Islam. The family was prosperous, and Abū Ḥanīfah himself became a successful manufacturer and merchant of silk. Renowned for his honest dealings, he devoted a good part of his income to charitable purposes, especially to helping scholars in need.

Abū Ḥanīfah had a well-rounded education under a number of able scholars. Drawn to theology in his youth, he soon made his mark as a theologian through participation in theological debates. For some reason his infatuation with theology did not last long, and he turned instead to law, which occupied him for the better part of his life. His principal teacher in this realm was Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān (d. 737), then the foremost representative of the Iraqi school of law. Abū Ḥanīfah remained his disciple for eighteen years and after his mentor's death was acknowledged as the head of the Iraqi school. He also learned from, and exchanged views with, a host of other scholars, notably Abū 'Amr al-Sha'bī (d. 722), 'Aṭā' ibn Abī Rabāḥ (d. 732), and

Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (d. 765). Abū Ḥanīfah also benefited from constant traveling, contacts with a wide variety of people, direct involvement in business life, and exposure to the heterogeneous and dynamic society of Iraq and the materially advanced conditions there.

Because of his independent income, Abū Ḥanīfah neither needed nor cared for governmental patronage and was thus immune from governmental pressure, a situation that helped Islamic law develop independently of political authority. Likewise, owing to his disposition and academic preoccupation, Abū Ḥanīfah did not involve himself in active power politics. At the same time, he was not entirely happy with the dynasties under which he lived—the Umayyads and the Abbasids—and his sympathies lay, if at all, with the opposition. It is probably for this reason, coupled with pietistic precaution, that Abū Ḥanīfah was unwilling to be identified with either of the two regimes; he repeatedly declined to accept governmental positions, especially judgeships, and presumably even lent moral support to the 'Alid revolt of Muḥammad, who was popularly known as al-Nafs al-Zakīyah (d. 762). These facts explain the harsh treatment meted out to Abū Ḥanīfah under both dynasties, culminating in imprisonment from the time of the revolt to his death five years later.

Contribution to Theology. Abū Ḥanīfah's main theological doctrines may be determined primarily from a small treatise, the *Epistle to 'Uthmān al-Battī*, which was doubtless written by the not-so-prolific Abū Ḥanīfah himself. A few other brief treatises, especially those called *Fiqh akbar I* and *Fiqh absaṭ*, also represent his theological views, though they may have been written by others.

His foremost concern, as reflected in these documents, was to refute the extremist theological positions of the time, especially those of the Khārijīs. Abū Ḥanīfah vigorously refuted the Khārijī doctrine that faith and good works were inalienable and that sins cast believers out of the fold of Islam, dooming them to suffer eternally in hell. He emphasized that faith, consisting essentially of verbal confession coupled with inner conviction, did not increase or decrease. Thus by mere sinning one did not lose faith. By taking this position Abū Ḥanīfah did not wish to demean moral uprightness or to lower the quality of religious life. Rather, in the context of the Khārijī denial to believing sinners the rights of Muslims, including their lives and property, a doctrine which had caused much bloodshed and seemed to threaten the orderly existence of the Muslim community, Abū Ḥanīfah's main concern was the juridical and communal aspect, of faith as the determinant of a person's membership in the Muslim *ummah* and the resulting entitlement to certain juridical rights and privileges.

The main opponents of the Khārijīs at the time were the Murji'ah. Abū Ḥanīfah's opposition to Khārijī doctrines understandably earned him the reputation of being a Murji'ī, a reputation which has been accepted rather uncritically by most Western scholars. The Murji'ah, and especially their extreme wing, held the view that if one had faith, sin would cause that person no harm. Abū Ḥanīfah's position was significantly different. In the *Epistle to 'Uthmān al-Battī* he writes: "He who obeys God in all the laws, according to us, is of the people of paradise. He who leaves both faith and works is an infidel, of the people of the [hell] fire. But one who believes but is guilty of some breach of the laws is a believing sinner, and God will do as He wishes about him: punish him if he wills, and forgive him if he wills."

On the whole, Abū Ḥanīfah's approach to theological questions is characterized by the tendency to avoid extremes and to adopt middle-of-the-road positions, and by his concern for the unity and solidarity of Muslims. His catholicity is reflected in many of his doctrines, as in his rejection of the schismatic positions of both the Shī'ah (who opposed 'Uthmān) and the Khārijīs (who opposed both 'Uthmān and 'Alī): "We disavow none of the companions of the apostle of God; nor do we adhere to any of them exclusively. We leave the question of 'Uthmān and 'Alī to God, who knows the secret and hidden things."

The kernel of Abū Ḥanīfah's position on sin became the standard orthodox doctrine. Moreover, his approach initiated a powerful theological movement which contributed to the final formulations of Sunnī theological doctrines on important questions relating to free will and predestination and the attributes of God. The impact of his ideas is reflected in the works of many major theologians, including al-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 933), al-Māturīdī (d. 944), and al-Samarqandī (d. 993).

Contribution to Law. Abū Ḥanīfah's overriding interest for the greater part of his life, however, was law, and it is upon his contribution in this field that his fame mainly rests.

By Abū Ḥanīfah's time interaction among the different centers of Islamic jurisprudence, notably Medina, Kufa, and Syria, had led to a growing awareness of disagreements on legal questions. As a result, there was a perceived need for an integrated code of legal doctrines that could be justified by reference to a set of generally recognized principles and thus be universally accepted by Muslims. Abū Ḥanīfah addressed himself almost single-mindedly to this task. In collaboration with a sizable number of his students, who were specialists in Is-

lamic law and its related fields, he thoroughly surveyed the entire field of Islamic law, reviewed the existing doctrines, and formulated new doctrines with a view to cover all possible contingencies.

Abū Ḥanīfah did not actually compose his legal corpus; instead, he dictated his doctrines to his students. The most reliable sources for these doctrines, therefore, are the works of his students, especially Abū Yūsuf (d. 799) and al-Shaybānī (d. 804). While their works abound with Abū Ḥanīfah's legal doctrines, statements about his legal theory are few and far between, and are of a fragmentary nature. Nonetheless, the assumption that he did not have a clear legal theory is contradicted by the high degree of systematic consistency found in his doctrines. Abū Ḥanīfah's legal theory can be, and has been, deduced by a careful study of his legal doctrines. In addition, works of a later period contain a few statements ascribed to Abū Ḥanīfah regarding his legal theory (see, e.g., al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rīkh Baghdād*, vol. 13, p. 368, and al-Makkī and al-Kardarī, *Manāqib*, vol. 1, p. 82). Whether Abū Ḥanīfah actually made those statements or not, they do seem to express broadly certain essentials of his legal theory. Likewise, later works also indicate that Abū Ḥanīfah had a set of fairly subtle and elaborate rules for interpreting the authoritative texts, designating their relative authority and working out their legal significance.

On the whole, Abū Ḥanīfah's legal doctrines evidence a high degree of systematic consistency and seem to be the work of a brilliant albeit speculative juristic mind. Again and again, he disregards established practice and considerations of judicial and administrative convenience in favor of systematic and technical legal issues. His legal acumen and juristic strictness were such that Abū Ḥanīfah reached the highest level of legal thought for his time. Compared with the work of his contemporaries, such as the Kufan judge-jurist Ibn Abī Laylā (d. 756), the Syrian al-Awzā'ī (d. 774), and the Medinese Mālik (d. 795), his doctrines are more carefully formulated and systematically consistent and his technical legal thought more highly developed and refined.

Legal doctrines before Abū Ḥanīfah had been formulated mainly in response to actual problems; he attempted instead to formulate doctrines relating to questions that might arise sometime in the future. This method, which considerably enlarged the scope of Islamic law, further refined the already advanced legal thinking that was required for its application. It was also to lead, however, to extravagant use of imagination, and much energy was devoted to solving questions that would virtually never arise in actual life.

Abū Ḥanīfah's excessive use of analogical reasoning *(qiyās)*, his wont to formulate doctrines in response to hypothetical legal questions, and above all his tendency to set aside isolated traditions *(āḥād)* if they tended to impose a restrictive interpretation on the legal import of Qur'anic verses, earned him the reputation of belonging to a group pejoratively called *ahl al-ra'y* ("people of independent opinion"), as opposed to *ahl al-ḥadīth* ("people of authoritative tradition"). This, however, was a polemical allegation rather than an objective statement of Abū Ḥanīfah's own standpoint or that of his school. Recent research has shown that there was scarcely any essential difference, in theory or practice, between the attitude of Abū Ḥanīfah and that of other legal schools regarding the use of a *ra'y* ("independent opinion") on questions of religious law. As for traditions, there is ample evidence to show that Abū Ḥanīfah accepted traditions from the Prophet as well as from companions, and that he even accepted isolated traditions. He tended to disregard isolated traditions in cases involving a contradiction between those traditions and what he considered to be more authentic sources, and he did so not arbitrarily but in the light of an elaborate set of rules that he and his school had developed.

Influence. The legal doctrines of Abū Ḥanīfah were further developed by his disciples, especially Abū Yūsuf and al-Shaybānī. The resulting Ḥanafī school of law found favor with the Abbasid caliphs and a number of Muslim dynasties, especially the Ottomans, who accorded it exclusive official recognition. Today it enjoys more or less official status in most of the Arab countries that were formerly under Ottoman rule (e.g., Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, Sudan, Syria). Since large numbers of Muslims voluntarily accepted the Ḥanafī school, its adherents are now more numerous than those of any other school. They constitute a vast majority of the Muslim population of South Asia, Turkey, the Balkans, Cyprus, West and Central Asia, China, and Afghanistan and are well represented in the Arab countries, especially Syria and Iraq.

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ZAFAR ISHAQ ANSARI

ABULAFIA, ME'IR (c. 1165–1244), known by the acronym RaMaH (Rabbi Me'ir ha-Levi). Abulafia was the first major Talmudist to appear in Spain in the period following Spanish Jewry's decisive transfer from Muslim to Christian rule in the mid-twelfth century. He was born in Burgos but moved early in his career to Toledo. His family included prominent communal leaders, some of whom served the Castilian monarchy as diplomats and administrators. Abulafia was fluent in Arabic and steeped in the culture of Spanish Jewry's "golden age"—its Hebrew linguistics and poetry, biblical exegesis, and philosophy. He was among the leading Hebrew poets of his generation, composing both secular and sacred poetry. Despite his versatility and breadth, Abulafia's religious sensibility was fundamentally conservative: his educational ideal was anchored in classical texts and his theological stance in tradition.

Abulafia's primary vocation was Talmudic studies. His detailed and highly original commentaries combine legal conceptualization with pragmatism. They also reveal the earliest traces of the northern European influence that was to transform Spanish *halakhah*. Only two of these commentaries (to the Babylonian Talmud tractates *Bava' Batra'* and *Sanhedrin*) have survived intact, but quotations from others were preserved by later authors and influenced the subsequent development of Jewish law. Abulafia was widely consulted on halakhic questions, although only a fraction of his *responsa* survive.

Abulafia also composed an important work of biblical "text criticism," *Masoret seyag la-Torah*. This study of defective and *plene* spellings in the Pentateuch has been credited with the establishment of a virtually definitive consonantal text for Torah scrolls throughout the world.

Abulafia is remembered by modern historians mostly as a critic of Maimonides (Mosheh ben Maimon, 1135/8–1204). In the first years of the thirteenth century, he attacked Maimonides' interpretation of *'olam ha-ba'*, "the world to come." Maimonides interpreted *'olam ha-ba'* along the lines of the philosophical notion of immortality. Abulafia thought this reinterpretation tantamount to a denial of the rabbinic idea of bodily resurrection and protested loudly. The ensuing controversy, which involved scholars in Catalonia, Provence, and northern

France, was apparently brought to a close by the European publication of Maimonides' *Epistle on Resurrection.*

More wide-ranging and intense was the controversy that engulfed Jewish communities throughout Europe during the 1230s. Abulafia, along with Spanish colleagues like Yehudah ibn Alfakhar and Moses Nahmanides, was aligned with French traditionalists critical of Maimonidean rationalism. But unlike his French allies, Abulafia often interpreted *aggadah* (the nonlegal component of Talmudic literature) nonliterally and engaged in extra-Talmudic scientific and philosophical studies. Moreover, he admired much of Maimonides' intellectual achievement. His antirationalism focused, rather, on radical tendencies present in Spain: a stringent and all-encompassing naturalism, as well as the doctrine of salvation by philosophy and the attendant threat of antinomianism. Against philosophical naturalism, Abulafia defended the primacy of God's free will, and against a philosophical soteriology, he defended the primacy of "Torah and good deeds."

Abulafia's mature years saw the emergence of Qabbalah as a vigorous competitor of Maimonidean rationalism for the loyalty of Hispano-Jewish intellectuals. Some traditions claim that Abulafia himself was a qabbalist. His writings do not, however, support this contention. They rather reflect a militantly antimythic sensibility and a conscious renunciation of the grand quest for cosmic "secrets"—philosophical or mystical—which Abulafia considered beyond man's ken.

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BERNARD SEPTIMUS

ABŪ YŪSUF (AH 113–182/731–798 CE), more fully Ya'qūb ibn Ibrāhīm al-Anṣārī al-Kūfī; Islamic jurisconsult and, with Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-Shaybānī (d. AH 189/805 CE), one of the founders of the Ḥanafī school of law. Abū Yūsuf flourished at a time of transition, when legal doctrine was still being formulated independently of the practice of the courts by groups of idealistic religious scholars in geographically determined schools. At the same time, individual scholars were appointed *qāḍī*s, or judges, by the government, especially under the Abbasids, who fostered a policy of official support for the religious law. The period also coincided with the beginning of the literary expression of technical legal thought. Abū Yūsuf's life and doctrines may be seen in the context of all these developments.

As a student and disciple of Abū Ḥanīfah, Abū Yūsuf is identified primarily with the tradition of Kufa in religious law and traditions. Born in Kufa, he was of Medinese ancestry. He is known to have studied with Mālik ibn Anas in Medina and others, but tradition states that Abū Ḥanīfah recognized the moral and intellectual excellence of the penniless young man and took him under his wing. Abū Yūsuf lived in Kufa as a practicing judge until he was appointed *qāḍī* of the capital (Baghdad), or chief judge, as his honorific *(qāḍī al-quḍāt)* indicates, by the Abbasid caliph, Hārūn al-Rashīd. The first to receive this title, Abū Yūsuf was not only consulted on the appointment and dismissal of the judiciary throughout the empire but acted as counselor to the caliph on legal and administrative matters and on financial policy. His chief extant work, the *Kitāb al-kharāj*, a treatise on taxation, public finance, and penal law, was written at the caliph's request and contains a long introduction addressed to him.

A number of works on religious law, most of which are either reasoned polemics or comparative studies of the doctrines of his contemporaries, are attributed to Abū Yūsuf, but few of these have survived. Abū Yūsuf's own doctrine can be seen within the framework of the developing technical legal thought of the Iraqi scholars, who lived in a more heterogeneous milieu and were inspired by a freer method of inquiry than that followed by the more tradition-bound Medinese. However, Abū Yūsuf tended to rely more on *ḥadīth* as the basis for legal rulings than had Abū Ḥanīfah, probably because a larger number of authoritative traditions from the Prophet had come into existence by Abū Yūsuf's time. Further, where Abū Ḥanīfah could proceed along lines of theoretical speculation and systematic consistency, Abū Yūsuf's experience as a practicing *qāḍī* caused him to mitigate his master's formalism, if often at the expense of his master's superior reasoning. In contrast to al-Shaybānī, an academic lawyer, prolific writer, and the systematizer of the school of Kufa, Abū Yūsuf was a man of affairs who made his influence felt in court circles. Since Abū Ḥanīfah himself left no writings on law, it was through the activity of these two men that the

ancient school of Kufa was to become the Ḥanafī school of law.

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JEANETTE A. WAKIN

ACEHNESE RELIGION. Aceh, a province of Indonesia on the northern tip of Sumatra, has in the 1980s a population of 2,610,000, of whom 2,548,000 are Muslims. Over 90 percent are Acehnese speaking; other languages include Gayo, the language of people living in the central mountains, and Alas, a Batak dialect spoken by a people living south of the Gayo. Most Acehnese are currently bilingual, also speaking Indonesian, the national language. Malay was spoken by some in the coastal areas in the nineteenth century and was also the language of the Acehnese court and of the literature produced there. Acehnese, however, was both the everyday and the literary language of the countryside; religious texts are found in both Acehnese and Malay.

Aceh was once an Islamic kingdom. When Ibn Baṭṭūṭah visited Pasè, on the east coast, in 1345 CE he found Islam well established. Aceh served as a source of Islamic conversion for other parts of the Indonesian archipelago. It was also host to visiting Islamic scholars from India, Syria, and Egypt.

Aceh's early history shows marked influences from the Indian subcontinent. This, perhaps, is the source of the heterodox mysticism expounded by Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī and his successor Shams al-Dīn al-Samatrā' (d. 1630). Shams al-Dīn won the favor of Aceh's greatest ruler, Iskandar Muda, whose posthumous name was Makota 'Ālam (r. 1607–1636). It has been suggested that Shams al-Dīn's teachings may not have been as heterodox as they were made out to be by succeeding Islamic teachers. Whatever the case, under the next king, Iskandar Thānī (r. 1636–1641), the followers of these mystics were banished from the court and their books burned. This was done after the arrival at court of the Gujarati Islamic scholar Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī in 1637, presumably with the aid of another scholar, 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Sinkilī.

Since that time Acehnese Islam has remained in the orthodox tradition. Mystical movements have not been as strong there as in other parts of the Indonesian archipelago. When they did arise, however, they frequently took unique forms rather than becoming part of the standard *tarekat* (Arab., *ṭāriqah*) orders, despite the fact that, particularly in the nineteenth century, many Acehnese in Mecca joined such orders, most commonly the Qādirīyah or Naqshbandīyah.

The Acehnese countryside was only nominally ruled by the court. Local nobility *(uleebelangs)* administered law with and often without the help of *kali* (judges). Their administration was frequently vigorously opposed by the *'ulamā'* (religious scholars) who ran religious boarding schools known as *rangkangs*.

In the villages there are two locations of religious practices. The first is the *meunasah*. Now, as in the nineteenth century, the *meunasah* is a dormitory for adolescent boys and often for some adult men as well. During the fasting month it is the site of the recitation of the voluntary prayers known as *traweh* and of the men's recitation of the Qur'ān. In the nineteenth century the official in charge of the *meunasah*, the *teungku meunasah*, collected the religious taxes *(zakāt* and *fitrah)*; currently a committee of village members does this. In 1906 Snouck Hurgronje reported that the *tenungku meunasah* lived off the *zakāt* and *fitrah* he collected as well as from the proceeds from arrangements of marriages and burial fees. Today, the *zakāt* and *fitrah* are distributed to the village poor while the local branch of the National Office of Religious Affairs is in charge of the registration of marriages. The *meunasah* is often the site of elementary instruction in Qur'anic recitation, though this also takes place in the homes of teachers.

Curing rituals and rites of passage take place at the other site of religious practice, the house. A series of rituals governs the stages of life beginning with pregnancy. Snouck Hurgronje described these as practiced in the late nineteenth century; they persist today, but now as then the formalities of the rituals are unexplicated.

Such rituals nonetheless serve important functions that can best be seen by tracing the life patterns of men and women. Born into the house owned by his mother, at adolescence a boy moves into the *meunasah* to sleep. In later adolescence he is likely to leave the village altogether, moving to distant parts suitable for the growing of cash crops or offering opportunities for trade. Even after marriage he is unlikely to return home for any length of time. The house his family lives in is owned by his in-laws and later given to his wife, who is

also likely to receive rice land for her maintenance. He is expected to provide money earned away from home for the care of his children. This pattern is most rigorously followed in the region of Pidie on the east coast and perhaps least prevalent on the west coast where cash crops are grown in the villages.

For the male, rites of passage mark many transition points of his movement out of his mother's house and his uneasy return to his wife's house. The negative quality of these rituals, by which I mean that they move men out of the households they are born into but never fully reestablish them in new ones, is partly responsible for the lack of Acehnese exegesis of the rituals. The male self is defined through them by movement away from women. The rituals sever connections that are to be reestablished not through ritual but through economic means. A man becomes fully a husband and father only when he provides money for his family. Even the wedding ceremony itself centers not on his relation to his wife but on his parents' relation to the parents of the bride. These ceremonies involve the negation of the signs that signify the boy's past rather than being the opportunity for their explication.

The islamization of Aceh can best be placed within this context. Snouck Hurgronje described the religious schools ordinarily found away from the villages. The 'ulamā', or teachers, who ran these schools were sometimes the leaders of reform movements that stressed the need for observance of the daily prayers and the fasting month, and for the combating of immoral practices. Popular response to such movements was enthusiastic but reform was never lasting. Paradoxically, the Acehnese adhered to Islam to the point, even, of willingness to die for it, as was proven by the longlasting Acehnese War (1873–1914?), but only sporadically observed its major tenets. However the avidity for dying in a war against unbelievers, so often attested to by the Dutch who attempted to "pacify" the Acehnese, takes on a certain sense in the context of their rites of passage. The constitution of the self through the negation of its own history culminated in death in the holy war.

Even after the end of organized hostilities against the Dutch, what might be called an individual form of the holy war continued. The Dutch named the sudden and often suicidal attack on Europeans that Acehnese believed would result in their immediate entry into paradise "Acehnese murder." Such attacks occurred from the end of the Acehnese War through the 1930s. During the 1930s, however, they became considerably less frequent, probably as a result of the popular success of the Islamic reform movement. Under the leadership of the Acehnese religious scholar Daud Beureu'eh, religious schools based on European models were established.

These schools taught both religious and secular subjects and produced the leaders of Aceh during the Japanese and revolutionary periods. The other success of this reform movement was the institutionalization of 'ibādah (religious ritual), particularly the daily prayers.

As a result of the world economic depression during the 1930s, Acehnese men became unable to provide cash for their households as was incumbent upon them to do. It was in that context that the reform movement took permanent hold. The movement promised the construction of a new society if only men followed religious ritual. Prayer in particular was thought to put men into a state of rationality (akal) in which their passionate nature (hawā nafsu) would be contained and channeled into religiously sanctioned ends.

Reform brought with it a new interpretation of the male life pattern, according to which movement out of the household was associated with the proper channeling of hawā nafsu. With that came an institutionalization of Islamic belief and practice that colored the everyday relationships of men both with other men in the market and domestically with their wives and mothers.

In the lives of women also, ritual served not to integrate individuals into their roles so much as it did to separate them from influences that would prevent them from fulfilling their expected functions. In the nineteenth century, beliefs about spirits similar to those found in Java were common in Aceh. Spirits, particularly those called burong, which seemed to represent unfulfilled desires, were thought to disrupt life. Like curing rites, women's rites of passage prevented or ameliorated the actions of these spirits.

With the success of reformist Islam, belief in these spirits has become unimportant for men. Even for women belief in spirits has been muted by the criticism of the reformers. However, these beliefs still play an important role for women in a somewhat disguised form. Spirits are believed to bring dreams. Women, remembering their dreams, remember too that they have been visited by spirits who have, however, left them. Being free of spirits, they feel a certain competence and authority in their domestic roles.

The Acehnese War gave the 'ulamā' an importance that they had not previously attained. With the end of the war, their influence was confined to what the Dutch defined as religious matters and they were presumably depoliticized. The greatest success of the 'ulamā', however, came with the popular acceptance of religious reform, which laid the basis for further political activity. Youth groups composed of former students of the modernist schools were the leaders of the 1945–1946 revolution, which resulted in the elimination of the Acehnese nobility. Daud Beureu'eh himself became mil-

itary governor of the province during the revolution and spent his time further consolidating modernist religious achievements. From 1953 till 1961, however, he led a rebellion against the central government; one demand of that rebellion was the acceptance of Islamic law as the law of the province. That demand was not met, but attempts to institutionalize Islamic law in the province continue in the 1980s.

Aceh is currently the site of an Islamic university, but the form that Islam should take continues to be a major concern. The success of the reformist movement itself has aroused opposition. Mystical movements have sprung up in areas where the tendency of men to leave their villages in pursuit of a living was not so pronounced because of the possibility of raising market crops locally. The Naqshbandī *tarekat*, members of which were mainly older villagers, had great popular success in the 1950s and 1960s on the west coast of Aceh and has spread to other areas. During the 1970s, numerous heterodox mystical sects arose that have been met with vigorous opposition by the *'ulamā'*.

[*See also* Islam, *article on* Islam in Southeast Asia.]

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ACHUAR RELIGION. See Quechua Religions, *article on* Amazonian Cultures.

ADAD was the Assyro-Babylonian god of storm and rain. The name *Adad*, also pronounced *Addu*, is the Akkadian form of *Hadad (Haddu)*, the name by which this god was known in West Semitic areas. The name itself is probably connected with Arabic *haddat* ("noise, thunder"), and is in origin an epithet meaning "thunderer." The god is frequently represented by the sign ^dIM ("wind" god), a sign also used to signify the Sumerian Ishkur (with whom Adad was identified) and the Hurrian Teshub.

Adad is generally considered to have been a West

Semitic god imported into Mesopotamia. He entered it early, for he is attested in early (third millennium) texts as one of several Semitic storm gods. Neither Ishkur nor Adad seems to have been very prominent in the Sumerian period, partly because of the Sumerian concentration on subterranean and riverine water as the source of fructification. From the Old Babylonian period on, however, Adad was a major god, and he may have been especially important in Assyria. He was fully assimilated into Mesopotamian religion and was given a genealogy as son of An, god of the sky and father of the gods.

As god of rain and storm, Adad had two related but distinct aspects. He was the god responsible for bringing the fertile rains, whose benevolence was required to maintain human prosperity; he was also the fierce god of the storm who could cause floods and disruptions. Both aspects are revealed in the myth *Atrahasis* (c. 1550 BCE), written in the late Old Babylonian period. In response to the noise made by humanity, Enlil, the god of wind and storms, first brought plague. This was lifted when Enki, god of the underground fresh waters, had the people worship only Namtar, the god of the plague. Next Enlil brought drought upon the people by commanding Adad to withhold his rain; the drought was relieved when Enki had the people build a temple and bring offerings to Adad, who thereupon brought the rain. Finally, when Enlil convinced the gods to bring a great flood, Adad came roaring and so brought the flood. A later Assyrian version of the tale relates how Adad rode upon the four winds, and the flood story in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* relates how Adad thundered in the cloud and turned light into blackness. The two aspects of Adad are also indicated in the epilogue of the law code of Hammurabi, which contains curses on anyone destroying the laws. There Adad is invoked to bring the malefactor's land to want and hunger by depriving it of rain, and to thunder over his city, causing flood. The curses in later historical inscriptions also invoke the ferocity of Adad's storm.

Adad was often connected with Shamash, the sun god. Together they were the guardians of the heavens. Shamash and Adad were the two gods invoked by the divination priests, and Shamash, Adad, and Marduk, the city god of Babylon, were considered the triad of divine judges.

Adad (Hadad) was a very important god in the West. He was closely related to Dagan, another important West Semitic deity, with whom he shared his wife Shala. Nicolas Wyatt (1980) has suggested that Dagan and Adad were originally one god and that *Adad* ("thunderer") was originally a title of Dagan. René Dussaud

(1936) proposed that *Hadad* was the true "name" of the Canaanite god Baal ("lord"), who, like Adad, was a god of the storm (see, however, Mulder, 1980).

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ADAM is the designation and name of the first human creature in the creation narratives found in the Hebrew scriptures (Old Testament). The word *adam* may refer to the fact that this being was an "earthling" formed from the red-hued clay of the earth (in Hebrew, *adom* means "red," *adamah* means "earth"). Significantly, this latter report is found only in *Genesis* 2:7, where the creator god enlivens him by blowing into his nostrils the breath of life. Here the first being is clearly a lone male, since the female was not yet formed from one of his ribs to be his helpmate (*'ezer ke-negdo; Gn.* 2:21–23). In the earlier textual account of *Genesis* 1:1–24a, which is generally considered to be a later version than that found in *Genesis* 2:4b–25, God first consults with his divine retinue and then makes an *adam* in his own "form and image": "in the form of God he created him; male and female he created them" (*Gn.* 1:27). If the second clause is not simply a later qualification of a simultaneous creation of a male and a female both known as *adam* (see also *Gn.* 5:1), then we may have a trace of the creation of a primordial androgyne.

Later ancient traditions responded to this version by speculating that the original unity was subsequently separated and that marriage is a social restitution of this polarity. Medieval Jewish Qabbalah, which took the expression "in the image of God" with the utmost seriousness, projected a vision of an *adam qadmon,* or "primordial Adam," as one of the configurations by which the emanation of divine potencies that constituted the simultaneous self-revelation of God and his creation could be imagined. And because Adam is both male and female according to scriptural authority, the qabbalists variously refer to a feminine aspect of the godhead that, like the feminine of the human world, must be reintegrated with its masculine counterpart through religious action and contemplation. Such a straight anthropomorphic reading of *Genesis* 1:27 was often rejected by religious philosophers especially (both Jewish and Christian), and the language of scripture was interpreted to indicate that the quality which makes the human similar to the divine is the intellect or will. Various intermediate positions have been held, and even some modern Semiticists have preferred to understand the phrase "image of God" metaphorically; that is, as referring to man as a divine "viceroy" (in the light of an Akkadian expression), and this in disregard of clearly opposing testimony in both Mesopotamian creation texts (like *Enuma elish*) and biblical language itself (cf. *Gn.* 5:1–3).

According to the first scriptural narrative, this *adam* was the crown of creation. Of his creation alone was the phrase "very good" used by God (*Gn.* 1:30f.). Moreover, this being was commissioned to rule over the nonhuman creations of the earth as a faithful steward (*Gn.* 1:29–2:9). Out of regard for the life under his domain, this being was to be a vegetarian. In the second version (where the specifying designation *ha-adam,* "the Adam," predominates; cf. *Gn.* 2:7–4:1), the creature is put into a divine garden as its caretaker and told not to eat of two trees—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life, that is, the two sources of knowledge and being—under pain of death (*Gn.* 2:15–17). This interdict is subsequently broken, with the result that death, pain of childbirth, and a blemished natural world were decreed for mankind (*Gn.* 3:14–19).

This primordial fault, which furthermore resulted in the banishment of Adam and his companion from the garden (*Gn.* 3:22–24), and the subsequent propagation of the human species as such (*Gn.* 4:1ff.), has been variously treated. The dominant rabbinic tradition is that the sin of Adam resulted in mortality for humankind and did not constitute a qualitative change in the nature of the species—it was not now set under the sign of sin as it was in the main Christian tradition, beginning with Paul and exemplified in the theologies of Augustine and John Calvin. For Christian theology, the innate corruption of human nature that resulted from Adam's fall was restored by the atoning death of a new Adam, Jesus (cf. *1 Cor.* 15:22). In one Christian tradition, the redemptive blood of Christ flowed onto the grave of Adam, who was buried under Calvary in the Holy Sep-

ulcher. The typologizing of Adam in Jewish tradition often focused on him as the prototype of humankind, and so the episode in Eden was read as exemplary or allegorical of the human condition and the propensity to sin. In this light, various spiritual, moral, or even legal consequences were also drawn, particularly with respect to the unity of the human race deriving from this "one father"—a race formed, according to one legend, from different colored clays found throughout the earth. In addition, mystics, philosophical contemplatives, and gnostics of all times saw in the life of Adam a pattern for their own religious quest of life—as, for example, the idea that the world of the first Adam was one of heavenly luminosity, subsequently diminished; the idea that Adam was originally a spiritual being, subsequently transformed into a being of flesh—his body became his "garments of shame"; or even the idea that Adam in Eden was originally sunk in deep contemplation of the divine essence but that he subsequently became distracted, with the result that he became the prisoner of the phenomenal world. For many of these traditions, the spiritual ideal was to retrieve the lost spiritual or mystical harmony Adam originally had with God and all being.

Apocryphal books about Adam and his life were produced in late antiquity and in the Middle Ages, and the theme was also quite popular in Jewish and Christian iconography, in medieval morality plays, and in Renaissance art and literature. Well known among the latter is John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, illustrated by John Dryden. Michelangelo's great *Creation of Adam* in the Sistine Chapel, the Edenic world in the imagination of the modern painter Marc Chagall, and the agonies of loss, guilt, and punishment seen in the works of Franz Kafka demonstrate the continuing power of the theme of Adam's expulsion from Eden.

[*See also* Eve; Fall, The; *and* Paradise.]

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MICHAEL FISHBANE

ĀDI GRANTH ("first book") is the earliest scripture of the Sikhs; the second scripture is the *Dasam Granth* ("tenth book"). The *Ādi Granth* is an anthology of medieval religious poetry, relating to the radical school of the Bhaki Movement. Those whose verses are included in it lived between the twelfth and the seventeenth century CE. The *Granth* was compiled by Gurū Arjan Dev in 1604 at Amritsar, utilizing the material already collected by Gurū Nānak, the founder of Sikhism, and Gurū Amar Dās, third *gurū* of the Sikhs, who also made several of his own additions. Bhāi Gurdās was the scribe. The scripture was installed as the *Gurū Granth Sāhib* in the Harī Mandir (Golden Temple) by the Gurū himself; the first high priest *(granthī)* was Bābā Budhā.

The original *Granth Sāhib* is known as *Kartārpur dī bīṛ* ("the recension of Kartarpur") because it came into the possession of Dhīr Mal, a grandson of Gurū Hargobind, the sixth *gurū*, who lived at Kartarpur in Jullundur district. While this recension was being taken for binding to Lahore, the second recension was prepared by Banno and is hence known as *Bhāī Banno dī bīṛ*. His additions to the end of *Granth Sāhib* were not approved by Gurū Arjan Dev. The third and final recension was prepared in 1704 by Gurū Gobind Singh, the tenth *gurū*, at Damdamā, where he resided for some time after leaving Anandpur. The scribe was Bhāī Manī Singh. This recension is known as *Damdame Wālī bīṛ*. The hymns of Gurū Tegh Bahādur, the ninth *gurū*, were added to it. The guruship was bestowed on this final recension by the tenth *gurū*, thereby ending the line of personal guruship.

Besides the hymns of the first five and the ninth Sikh *gurū*s, the hymns of the pre-Nānak saints, including Nāmdev, Kabīr, and Ravidās, and the verses of some contemporary poets, mostly bards, are included in the *Ādi Granth*. The poetry of the scripture is musical and metrical. Except for the *japu* of Gurū Nānak in the beginning and the *slok*s and *swayyā*s at the end, all the other compositions are set in various *rāga*s and *rāginī*s. These compositions include hymns of the *gurū*s in serial order, in set patterns of stanza forms and musical notations. These are followed by longer poems with special subheadings, then the *chhant*s and *vār*s of the Sikh *gurū*s in serial order. At the end of each *rāga* or *rāginī* appear the hymns of the various saints in turn, beginning with Kabīr and followed by Nāmdev, Ravidās, and others. Various forms of versification, including folk song forms, are used. [*See also the biography of Kabīr.*]

Because the saints and *gurū*s represented in the *Ādi Granth* belong to different regions and social strata, the scripture is a treasury of medieval Indian languages

and dialects. Besides writings in the common language, called Sant *bhāṣā* ("saint language"), containing affixes and case terminations of the language of the area of the saint concerned, the *Ādi Granth* also contains poems composed in Braj Bhāṣā, Western Hindi, Eastern Punjabi, Lahndi, and Sindhi. The influence of Eastern, Western, and Southern Apabhraṃśas, Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, and Marathi are discernible in various poems and hymns. The saint-poets have clothed their spiritual experiences in the imagery derived from both the world of nature and the world of man. Because of the similarity of spiritual experience, there is undoubtedly a good deal of repetition in the content of these verses, but the diverse imagery used in the hymns makes the poetry appealing and always fresh.

The saint-poets and *gurū*s represented in the *Ādi Granth* speak of the prevailing degeneration of religious life. They denounce formalism, ritualism, and symbolism. They consider ethical greatness the basis for spiritual greatness. The seekers must imbibe godly attributes and other qualities in their lives and avoid sinful acts. Prominence is given to truth, but still greater prominence to the practice of truth. The active life of a householder is considered the best life, and the division of mankind into castes and various stages is rejected. The hand and the mind both must act together to attain loftier ideals. There is a close connection in the *Ādi Granth* between the doctrine of *karman* and that of grace. Although it holds that *hukm* (the will of God) reigns supreme, the *Ādi Granth* does not deny the freedom of the individual. The reality of the world forms the basis of Sikh ethics. Though the world is transient, its existence is real.

The *Ādi Granth* opposes all distinctions of caste and color. It espouses universal brotherhood. Religious practices and outward symbols create ego, which can be overcome by remembrance of the name of the Lord, in the company of the saints *(sādh sangat)* and the grace of the true *gurū* and the Lord. We meet the true *gurū* by the grace of God and realize God by the grace of the true *gurū*. The ideal is the realization of God, and for the attainment of this ideal the disciple must seek the guidance of the true *gurū*, who has full knowledge of *brahman*. With the tenth *gurū*'s surrender of personal guruship to the *Granth* itself, the Word (Skt., *śabda*) henceforth is the *gurū*. The lotus-feet of the Lord are the only heaven for the true disciple. The state of realization is called *sahj* ("equipoise"). In this state the mind and intellect become absolutely pure.

According to the *Ādi Granth*, God *(brahman)* is one without a second. His name is Truth. He is the creator, devoid of fear and enmity. He is immortal, unborn, and self-existent. He is truth, consciousness, and bliss. He is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient. He is changeless and flawless. When he wills to become many, he begins his sport like a juggler. Before the creation he is in abstract meditation and without attributes, but after the creation, he, as Īśvara, manifests himself as the treasure house of all qualities. The soul *(jīva)* is part and parcel of *brahman*. It has its own individuality, but since it comes out of *brahman* it is also immortal. The physical body decays, but the *jīva* continues forever. *Prakṛti*, or *māyā*, is not a separate ultimate reality. It has been created by God. It leads the *jīva* away from God and thus toward transmigration. When the influence of *māyā* vanishes, the *jīva* realizes *brahman*. It is wrong to delimit the creation of the infinite Lord. The Truth is immanent in the universe. The human body is its repository and an epitome of the universe. It is a microcosm.

[*See also* Dasam Granth *and the biographies of Nānak and Gobind Singh.*]

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SURINDAR SINGH KOHLI

ADLER, FELIX (1851–1933), social, educational, and religious reformer; founder of the New York Society for Ethical Culture. Born in Alzey, Germany, Adler came to the United States at the age of six when his father, Rabbi Samuel Adler, accepted the country's most prestigious Reform pulpit, at Temple Emanu-El in New York. By example and instruction his parents fostered his passion for social justice, religious sensibilities, and Jewish education. After graduation from Columbia College in 1870, he returned to Germany to study at the Berlin Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums with Abraham Geiger in order to prepare for a career in the Reform rabbinate. When the school's opening was delayed for almost two years, Adler immersed himself in university studies, first at Berlin and then at Heidelberg, where he received his doctorate in Semitics *summa cum laude* in 1873. His formative German experiences precipitated an intellectual break with

Judaism: after his exposure to historicism, evolution, critical studies of the Bible, anthropology, and Neo-Kantianism, Adler's belief in theism and the spiritual uniqueness of Judaism was undermined. Kant's analysis of ethical imperatives lent authority to Adler's new faith in a moral law independent of a personal deity, and the German industrial order, with its attendant socioeconomic problems for labor and society, along with Friedrich Lange's proposed solutions, brought into focus the major ills of industrial society that Adler came to address in America throughout his life.

Upon his return home, it was expected that he would eventually succeed his father at Emanu-El, but his one sermon on 11 October 1873 alienated some of the established members. Adler's admirers, however, sponsored him as nonresident professor of Hebrew and Oriental literature at Cornell between 1873 and 1876, and they then served as the nucleus of a Sunday lecture movement that he inaugurated on 15 May 1876. The following February this movement was incorporated as the New York Society for Ethical Culture.

To Adler, this society represented a religious organization that transcended creeds and united people in ethical deeds; it was dedicated to the inherent worth of each individual, to personal and communal ethical growth, and to the application of an ethical perspective to every social context. Over the years, the society served as Adler's platform not only for philosophical conceptualizations but also for concrete social reforms. In the late 1870s he established the first free kindergarten in New York, the first district nursing program, and a workingman's lyceum; in 1880 he organized a workingman's school (later the Ethical Culture School), and in 1891 he founded the Summer School of Applied Ethics. Adler was also intimately involved in tenement housing reform and good-government clubs and served as chairman of the National Child Labor Committee from 1904 to 1921. He launched the Fieldston School in 1928.

As an intellectual, Adler enjoyed the esteem of his peers and accumulated impressive scholarly credentials: he founded the *International Journal of Ethics* (1890), was appointed professor of political and social ethics at Columbia (1902), and delivered Oxford's Hibbert Lectures (1923), published as *The Reconstruction of the Spiritual Ideal* (1924). Nevertheless, the fundamental intellectual effort of his last years—the philosophical justification of his ethical ideal of a spiritual universe— had negligible impact. Where this was attempted, as in *An Ethical Philosophy of Life* (1918), it was dismissed as an example of Neo-Kantian religious idealism. Indeed, his earlier, less abstruse works—*Creed and Deed* (1877), *Life and Destiny* (1903), *The Religion of Duty* (1905), *The*

World Crisis and Its Meaning (1915)—were far better received.

In his day, Adler was publicly lauded as prophet, social visionary, and apostle of moral justice even by the Jewish community he had left. Yet toward the end of his life he was intellectually alienated from his own organization, and today most Ethical Culture members know him only as their movement's founder.

[*See also* Ethical Culture.]

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The fullest biography is Horace L. Friess's *Felix Adler and Ethical Culture* (New York, 1981). Friess (Adler's son-in-law) presents the full scope of Adler's activities combined with personal memories of the man and an insightful analysis of Adler's intellectual evolution and his final ethical position. My own study *From Reform Judaism to Ethical Culture: The Religious Evolution of Felix Adler* (Cincinnati, 1979) analyzes Adler's religious departure from Judaism, its causes, and its repercussions for both Adler and the American Jewish community. It treats the Jewish reaction to Adler and to the Ethical Culture Society and uses Adler as a model by which to understand new models of Jewish apostasy in modern Jewish history. Robert S. Guttchen's *Felix Adler* (New York, 1974) presents a very useful analysis of Adler's concept of human worth and his educational philosophy. The book is prefaced with a perceptive biographical sketch of Adler by Howard B. Radest. The latter's own book, *Toward Common Ground: The Story of the Ethical Societies in the United States* (New York, 1969), furnishes further information on Adler.

BENNY KRAUT

ADONIS. In classical studies the myth of Adonis has long been interpreted as a Greek symbol of the seasonality of vegetable life, representing the death of plants during the cold season and their revival in spring. The diffusion of the name of Adonis from Oriental prototypes to Greece is undisputed. Adonis is closely related to the Assyrian god Tammuz and the Sumerian Dumuzi, both of whom, like Adonis, were companions of goddesses of fertility and love; both suffered death and mutilation, as did Attis at the hands of Cybele, the Phrygian mother goddess, and as did Osiris, the Egyptian brother-husband of Isis, who was attacked by Seth in the form of a boar. James G. Frazer saw Adonis as a demon-god representing plant life, but this is now disputed by, among others, Marcel Detienne. In a careful structural analysis of Greek spice- and vegetable-codes, Detienne has shown that Adonis is the very opposite of the Greek representation of cereal growth, the goddess Demeter.

Extant myths depict Adonis as having been born from an incestuous union between Cinyras and his daughter Smyrna. Having unwittingly been seduced by his

daughter, Cinyras becomes enraged and pursues her; the gods change the fleeing Smyrna into a myrrh tree, from which Adonis is born. Adonis was then entrusted to the goddess of the underworld, Persephone, by Aphrodite. After taking the child from a closed chest and raising him, Persephone falls in love with him, depriving Aphrodite of her rights. The goddesses appeal to the Olympian tribunal to adjudicate the case: each goddess is permitted to enjoy the favors of Adonis for a third of the year. When Aphrodite tries to cheat in order to get more than her share of his company, the enraged Persephone organizes the killing of Adonis in a field of lettuce, using Ares disguised as a boar.

The opposition between Adonis's birth from the myrrh tree, which produces a dry spice that, like perfumes, is used by the Greeks as an aphrodisiac and in sacrifices, and his death in a field of lettuce, a vegetable that signifies impotence and decay and according to Pythagorean custom was eaten during the hottest period of summer when women are most wanton, leads recent writers to see Adonis as a symbol for immature, wanton sexuality, in opposition to the patroness of marriage and agriculture, Demeter. This opposition is borne out by the celebration of the festival Adonia, which was held during the hottest period of the summer, when the Dog Star, Sirius, rises. Courtesans then plant "gardens of Adonis" on their rooftops and entertain and carouse with male customers. The withering of the gardens of Adonis in their pots symbolizes the early death of Adonis, who thus fails to achieve the ideal of a mature Greek citizen in marriage. The botanical and astronomical as well as gastronomic codes around the figure of Adonis thus also provide indications about the position of women and their sexual role in Greek social life. At one extreme lies the unmarried virgin Artemis and at the other the sexual excess of Adonis, who is closely linked with Aphrodite and the life of courtesans; Demeter provides the ideal model for women in temperate, controlled marital life.

[*See also* Dying and Rising Gods.]

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KLAUS-PETER KOEPPING

ADRET, SHELOMOH BEN AVRAHAM (c. 1235–1310), known by the acronym RaSHBa' (Rabbi Shelomoh ben Avraham); Spanish rabbi and legal authority. Born into a leading family of Aragon, Adret studied with Yonah Gerondi and with the great Talmudist, biblical commentator, and qabbalist Moses Nahmanides (Mosheh ben Naḥman). During his four decades as rabbi of Barcelona, Adret was considered by the Aragonese kings to be the dominant Jewish figure in the realm.

Adret's scholarly reputation was established by his *novellae* (Heb., *ḥiddushim*) on many Talmudic tractates, and contemporaries recognized him as an outstanding authority on Jewish law. Rabbis of Aragon and of many distant countries submitted their formal legal inquiries to him, and his collected *responsa*, numbering in the thousands, made him one of the most prolific and influential of all Jewish legal respondents. An important source for the history of Jewish communal life, these *responsa* treat problems relating to communal self-government, fiscal administration, and institutions such as the synagogue, court, house of study, and voluntary societies.

Occasionally Adret was confronted with formal questions of a theological nature, usually flowing from problematic biblical passages or rabbinic pronouncements. Scattered through his *responsa* are significant statements on the proper role of philosophical speculation in interpreting traditional texts, the possibility of contemporary prophecy, astrology, dreams, magic and divine providence, the search for rational explanations of the commandments, the immutability of the Torah, and eschatological doctrine.

Adret strongly denounced the messianic pretensions of the eccentric mystic Avraham Abulafia and later claimed that without his firm opposition many Jews would have been deceived. He also warned Jewish communities against a Jew called the "prophet of Ávila," who maintained that a mystical work had been revealed to him by an angel.

His most controversial foray into public affairs was instigated by complaints from southern France about the destructive impact of philosophical learning upon young Jews. In 1305, after a three-year correspondence, Adret promulgated a formal ban in his Barcelona synagogue, prohibiting those less than twenty-five years old from studying books of Greek natural science or metaphysics. The writings of Maimonides were not proscribed, and the study of medicine was explicitly excluded from the prohibition.

Because of his role in this conflict, Adret was frequently depicted by nineteenth-century Jewish historians as part of a group of narrow-minded, obstinate zeal-

ots. His own work, however, especially his *novellae* on selected Talmudic *aggadot*, reveals an openness to the use of philosophical literature for exegetical purposes, although he clearly repudiated the extreme philosophical positions denying creation and individual providence. He also suggested qabbalistic interpretations of rabbinic statements. The fact that several of his disciples wrote commentaries on the Torah or explications of Nahmanides' commentary in which the mystical element was pronounced led Gershom Scholem to speak of the qabbalistic "school" of Adret.

Adret's writings include answers to Christians who used the *aggadah* to undermine the authority of the sages or to support Christian theological positions; one source describes an actual debate with a Christian thinker. Adret is also presumed to have written a *Ma'amar 'al Yishma'e'l*, published by Perles, responding to the anti-Jewish tracts of the eleventh-century Spanish Muslim intellectual Aḥmad ibn Ḥazm. This apologetical work defends the Torah against charges of containing inconsistencies and describing repugnant behavior; it answers the claim that the original Torah had been lost and that Judaism contained perversions and distortions of God's authentic teaching.

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<div align="right">Marc Saperstein</div>

AEGEAN RELIGIONS. The Aegean world is composed of regions limited in area but geographically and culturally very diverse, whose evolution proceeded in an irregular and more or less independent fashion: whereas the Cyclades, the island microcosm situated between Europe and Asia, flourished as early as the third millennium BCE, Crete reached its apogee in the first half of the second millennium, and the continent, where the Greeks seem to have settled shortly before 2000 BCE, achieved a great civilization at Mycenae only in the second half of the same millennium. Although related, the religions of the Aegean that developed around these three poles preserved an undeniable regional originality.

Cycladic Religion

The Cycladic religion of the Early Bronze Age (third millennium BCE) remains difficult to define even after a century of research. Archaeological data are severely lacking, as no religious architecture has been identified with any certainty. A stone pyxis (boxlike vase) from Melos perhaps provides us with an image of a Cycladic sanctuary: the vase is made up of a set of seven cylindrical receptacles grouped in a square around a central space to which there is access through a kind of roofed porch. An Aegean parallel, but of a later date, is offered by the palatial silo building on the site of Mallia in Crete. On the other hand, the multiplicity of the recipients relates this vase to the series of kernoi, or offering vases, that were common in the Cyclades at that time.

Especially well known from the Cycladic civilization are the small marble "idols," generally found in a funerary context. The majority are nude female figures, related, despite their slender, elongated forms, to the voluptuous Neolithic fertility figurines of continental Europe. The Cycladic idols do not seem to have served as cult statues. Yet a silver diadem from Syros may represent a religious scene involving two animals and two bird-headed feminine figures with raised arms, separated by stellar motifs. Comparable symbols decorate a type of vase whose function is not well established, the terra-cotta "frying pan." These flat, wide vases with their bifid handles bear on their reverse an incised decoration: a boat against a background of connected spirals and a pubic triangle between stylized plants on an example from Syros, and a stellar motif and pubic triangle on another. The belief in a feminine principle of fertility linked with the celestial and marine worlds and undoubtedly related to Oriental models appears to be an established fact, even though the forms of worship are unknown to us.

After 2000 BCE the Cyclades seem to have lost their religious autonomy. The site of Akrotiri on the island of Thera, once buried under volcanic ashes, has revealed a series of frescoes that, though inspired by Crete, display a certain originality. While some of the women depicted follow the ritual style of the Minoans, with flounced skirts and bared breasts, a young priestess carrying of-

ferings is clothed in an ample tunic. However, a scene portraying the ritual gathering of crocuses and the presence on the site of stone horns of consecration betray the extent of Minoan influence.

Religious architecture, until then nonexistent, developed at Keos and Melos. A small temple built at Hagia Irini was closer in plan, with its antechamber, interior room, and annexes, to the constructions of the continent than to those of Crete. One of the annexes was crowded with female terra-cotta statues whose naked, ample breasts and long skirts recall the Cretan prototypes. It has been supposed that they belonged to a cult of Dionysos, whereas at Phylakopi a goddess seems to have been worshiped in the form of a figurine decorated in the ceramic style of Mycenae, thus probably indicating a religious takeover from the continent.

Minoan Religion

Crete remained relatively independent of the neighboring Cyclades during the entire Early Bronze Age. An original Cretan civilization did not reach its height until the beginning of the second millennium BCE, with the building of the palaces attributed to the more or less mythical Minos. Yet no clean break with the preceding period is discernible at that time, especially as far as religion is concerned.

Places of Worship. It is usually maintained that, in contrast to the contemporaneous Near East and Egypt, large constructions of a religious nature were unknown in Minoan Crete. Supposedly, a temple conceived as a monumental dwelling for the divinity was a notion foreign to the Minoans, whose architecture therefore in no way foreshadowed the sacred buildings of Classical Greece. However, without equating the Minoan palace with the Oriental temple, which was at the same time residence of the god, lodging for the priests, and center of many economic activities, one cannot forget that the palace gave a monumental setting to certain religious manifestations.

Still, an important architectural framework was not necessary to the cult, and wherever architecture does appear, it is usually very modest. It is often necessary to turn to figured depictions, the only surviving evidence we have. Thus on a gold ring from Isopata, four female figures can be seen wearing the ritual dress, with exposed breasts and flounced skirts, and dancing in a landscape flowered with clusters of lilies. Probably this is a replica of a Knossian fresco in which a group of women in similar attire are shown in the middle of a wood. In other representations, architecture, though present, plays only a secondary role in the form of a small structure out of which grows a tree—clearly, no mere figurative schematization. One may well imagine,

therefore, that at least some of the Minoan rites took place in a context of rocks, trees, or landscape unmodified by human intervention.

The same spirit pervades the two great categories of Minoan places of worship: peak sanctuaries and caves. The cave offers a crude natural setting that nature itself has transformed by decorating it with strangely shaped, more or less anthropomorphic or zoomorphic concretions in which, from a very early period, the Minoans saw manifestations of the divinity. Some of these caves are particularly well known: the cave of Kamares in the Ida mountain chain, the cave of Arkalochori, and finally the cave of Psychro, also called the Diktaean Cave. The last-mentioned presents an interesting arrangement. In the upper room a quadrangular altar made of rough-hewn stones was surrounded by offerings: stone libation tables, clay vases, and a double ax of bronze, mingled with animal bones and ashes. In an adjoining room other offerings were deposited inside a rectangular *temenos* (sacred enclosure), among them some bronze weapons. Finally, in a lower room in the vicinity of a small pond, one finds spear points, double axes, and bronze figurines intentionally wedged into the interstices of the stalactites. Another cave, at Skotino, has been interpreted as the actual labyrinth of Greek mythology; it may be significant that it is still used each year in July for feasts in honor of Hagia Paraskevi, whose chapel stands on the edge of the chasm.

Undeniably, the peak sanctuaries bring to mind the high places of Canaan. On a sealing from Knossos a feminine form appears on a mountaintop flanked by two lions and holding out a javelin or scepter to a worshiper arching his back in the Cretan attitude of adoration. One of the sanctuaries is depicted on a stone vase from the palace of Zakros: in a mountainous landscape overrun by wild goats, a tripartite construction surmounted by horns of consecration, ibexes, and birds rises within a walled enclosure of squared blocks. A fragment from Knossos shows a worshiper in comparable surroundings placing on a rock a basket filled with offerings. Archaeological evidence is less precise: although some installations have been discovered on the mountaintops at Petsofas near Palaikastro, on the Kofinas in the Asteroussia Mountains, and on Mount Juktas near Knossos, no elaborate architecture has been found. At Petsofas a terrace of large blocks supported a building with several rooms. Our conception of the sanctuary on Mount Juktas has been modified by recent findings: instead of the three rooms identified by Arthur Evans within an enclosure of large blocks, the sanctuary is composed of at least three terraces juxtaposed on the hillside with a stepped altar at the top, on the edge of a deep crevice in the rock. At Petsofas as on Mount Juk-

tas, human or animal figurines of various sizes fill the layer of offerings that, here also, is mixed with ashes and charcoal, the remains of ritual fires; often only parts of the human body are deposited here as ex-votos, and little clay balls seem to prefigure the prayer pellets of Buddhism.

For a long time it was believed that caves and summits were the only public places where rites were celebrated (Nilsson, 1927). It now appears that, in the cities as well as in the country, the Minoans built more or less important religious edifices that functioned independently of other buildings. On the southern coast of the island the settlement of Myrtos, from the prepalatial period, presents a set of four unpretentious rooms in which a low base of stones and clay supported a feminine figurine, evidently an object of collective worship. At Mallia, a group of three rooms dating from the period of the first palaces shows no evidence of architectural progress, but on the floor of the main room there was a rectangular offering table, blackened by fire, to which one could have easy access from the neighboring street. This recalls a similar arrangement in a small room in the first palace of Phaistos that was also accessible from the outside through an opening in the west facade.

Outside the towns, the "country villa" of Kannia near Gortyna (if, as its discoverer believes, it has not undergone modification) represents an even more imposing building in which, out of twenty-seven rooms, five appear to have had a religious purpose, making it more akin to a large sanctuary than to a private house. More recently, near Arkhanes on the northern foothills of Mount Juktas, beside the Minoan road leading from Knossos to the peak sanctuary, a construction has been discovered with three rooms opening onto a corridor; clay feet, a vase decorated with a bull in relief, and an incised dagger found on a human skeleton endow the site with unquestionable religious significance. As for the sanctuary of Kato Syme near Viannos, it presents features heretofore unique: a building of several rooms situated in a mountain gorge far from any populated area, on the edge of a spring and at the foot of a steep cliff—a site used until Roman times for sacrifices and burnt offerings in honor of a divine couple.

But the religious building par excellence in Crete is the palace, although it did not have exactly the same functions as the Mesopotamian temple. Struck by the religious aura that pervaded the edifice he was uncovering at Knossos, Arthur Evans (1901) named it the "palace-sanctuary" and identified it with the labyrinth of Greek legend, the residence of the monstrous Minotaur. The other palaces, at Phaistos, Mallia, and Zakros, while not absolutely identical to that at Knossos, are remarkably

similar. To the west (except at Zakros), a wide esplanade is crossed by stone-paved causeways leading to the main entrances and to a "theatral area" (Knossos, Phaistos); at Knossos, two altar bases emphasize the religious function of this courtyard. Inside the edifice, another rectangular court served as a theater for great popular spectacles, as proved by tiers of steps on the sides and, at Mallia, by a hollow altar, or bothros, dug in the center. The frescoes covering the walls of the palace at Knossos evoke the rites that took place there: processions, offerings, bullfights. The palatial architecture, with its recesses of the facade, porticoes, and wide staircases, conferred a true monumentality upon the ceremonies for which it served as setting.

The building itself concealed in its maze many rooms or places with a religious function. Evans recognized very early at Knossos the particular role of the pillar rooms that, according to him, were in fact cult chambers with offerings placed around a pillar marked with sacred signs. Similarly, small rooms with the floor on a lower level, which are also present in certain houses and generally adjoin ceremonial halls, must have been used as lustral areas, according to the most plausible interpretation. Finally, sanctuary rooms proper, often accompanied by storerooms for sacred objects or offerings, initially contained the effigy of the divinity.

Gods and Sacred Symbols. The divinity remains difficult to identify with any certainty among the representations in use in Minoan Crete, owing to the absence of a distinctive sign comparable to the horns adorning the headdresses of the gods and goddesses of Mesopotamia from the middle of the third millennium BCE. Thus, following Evans, the double image of a snake goddess was often recognized in the two faience figurines found in the Temple Repositories of Knossos, west of the central courtyard, but they could also be worshipers or priestesses decked out with the attributes of the goddess herself: flounced skirt, open bodice, snakes, and leopard. There seems to be a clear filiation, however, with later figurines from Gazi and Karphi, whose nature is emphasized by the sacred symbols attached to the headdress: poppy blossoms, horns of consecration, and birds.

That these are cult statues seems to be proved by the above-mentioned figurine from Myrtos, found toppled from its base. Twenty-one centimeters high, holding a pitcher under her arm, she belongs to a group of contemporary images of a fertility goddess. The often accentuated breasts and a painted or incised representation of the pubic triangle emphasize their nature; the figurines from Knossos as well as those from Gazi and Karphi are but a later disguise.

Attempts have been made to distinguish in the Cretan pantheon several goddesses with different attributes ac-

cording to scenes in which a feminine figure seems to play a specific role: snake goddess, mountain goddess, war goddess, sea goddess, goddess of the hunt, tree goddess. The absence of any intelligible text from this period does not help to clarify the situation. Later texts from the Greek period mention several names of pre-Hellenic formation—*Britomartis* ("the sweet virgin"), *Diktynna*, ("the lady of Dikte"), and *Ariadne* ("the very holy")—all of which may be diverse epithets of the same divinity. As Stylianos Alexiou correctly noted in *Minoikos politismos* (Minoan Civilization; 1964), "it would be vain to expect a logical classification in a spiritual context governed by emotion and intuition" (pp. 64–65).

However, a male god appears next to the goddess, but always in a subordinate position. On a gold ring from Knossos the god is shown as a diminutive figure with a staff in his hand who descends from heaven in answer to the prayers of a female worshiper standing in front of a column and a small sanctuary. Intaglios from Kydonia grant him a more important place, either between a winged goat and a demon of fertility or slaying two lions. On a sealing from Knossos, like the goddess herself he strides forward, wearing a tall, pointed tiara, armed with shield and spear, and accompanied by a lioness. In Greek texts he is named Velchanos or Hyakinthos and is assimilated to Zeus, but Zeus as a child or adolescent. The Minoan goddess, on the other hand, seems to survive in the Classical pantheon sometimes with the features of Artemis or Demeter, sometimes with those of Athena or Aphrodite, diversified forms of the same entity. In his article "Aegean Religion," D. G. Hogarth seems to have been right in defining the relationship between the goddess and the god as a "dual monotheism" (*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hastings, vol. 1, 1908, p. 143).

But if the same divine being can easily embody different functions, he can appear as well under different aspects without changing his function. At Çatal Hüyük in Neolithic Anatolia, the feminine principle of fertility is represented sometimes in human form and sometimes symbolically by plaster reliefs of breasts, while the male principle appears sometimes as a bull's or ram's head but also as horns set into benches or small brick pillars. Similarly, in Crete a bird generally identified as a dove takes the place of the goddess, and a bull, that of the god. As for the snake, it has been diversely interpreted. A genius of the house, according to some (Nilsson, 1927), it would be the attribute of "the household goddess." But as a subterranean animal that sheds its skin, it would more likely be the symbol of the chthonic and reviviscent function of the Minoan goddess.

Moreover, the Minoan religion uses a whole range of religious symbols whose meaning is not always clear to us. Among them, the double ax occupies a place apart: sometimes a sign accompanying the goddess as shown on the seals of Knossos, where it dominates the goddess herself, it can also be her substitute and be worshiped in the same way. One of the possible etymologies of *labyrinth* is the word *labrus*, which designated the ax in Lydian. The labyrinth of the legend, generally identified with the palace of Knossos, would then be the House of the Double Ax. Numerous bronze examples of double axes were set in stone bases there, and images of them were incised on the blocks of the walls or on the pillars of the crypts. [*See also* Labyrinth.]

The question of the pillar or column, that is, of architectural support, is more doubtful. Indeed, Evans (1901) considered that the pillar, like the tree, was an aniconic representation of the divinity and therefore an object of worship for the votaries. Others, in particular Nilsson (1927), have thought that the pillar was not sacred in itself but could possibly become so in a certain context. It is nonetheless true that at Knossos, in the crypts of the palace and of the Royal Villa, small basins set in the floor at the foot of the central pillar can be explained only as libation receptacles for ritual ceremonies, and that the gold ring mentioned earlier represents a worshiper standing before an isolated column in mystical expectation.

As for the horns of consecration, they emphasize the sacred character of a building, scene, or object. The three representations, on a bronze votive tablet from the Diktaean Cave, of a branch rising from a pair of horns show the importance of the sign even in popular imagery. Although rarer, the sacred knot, the flounced skirt, the figure-of-eight shield, and the helmet appear to have an undeniable but more specific relationship with the divinity.

Cult Ceremonies. We have little information concerning the Minoan priesthood other than a few representations in which the priest is distinguished by his long, Syrian-type dress and fenestrated ax. It is likely that the priests and priestesses usually wore the same attire as both the gods themselves and ordinary worshipers: for the women, flounced skirts leaving the torso nude, and for the men, mere loincloths. Evans (1921) put forward the hypothesis of a "priest-king" with both political and religious functions, who was obliged to have his powers renewed by the divinity every nine years. Although subsequent criticism has demolished Evans's view that the Knossian Priest-King Fresco depicts such a figure, he can undoubtedly be recognized in certain other scenes portraying him as a young man with long hair, wearing bracelets and necklaces and sometimes holding a long stick or spear.

The encounter with the divinity, for the faithful as well as for the king, is an attested episode in the Minoan cult. On the sealing from Knossos already mentioned, the goddess is seen standing on a mountain peak; a worshiper, perhaps the priest-king himself, faces her, his body strongly arched backward and his hand raised to his face. This is the attitude of adoration, also found in bronze or clay statuettes: in the presence of the divinity, the worshiper must protect his eyes from her brightness. Central to the cult, this act was made possible only by the epiphany, or visible manifestation, of the goddess, which was the goal of the entire ritual.

As in Near Eastern religions, the first of these rites consisted in the offering of perishable foodstuffs, solid or liquid, in baskets or vases. One must distinguish, from the typological and functional points of view, between the altar and the offering table. The altar, which could have been simply an uncut rock, was often made of a more or less cubic block of stone with concave sides; in the palace of Mallia it was carved with two signs: a star and a cross. More monumental altars, with or without steps, are also found in the courts of the palaces and in the peak sanctuaries (Mount Juktas). A fragment of a pyxis from Knossos depicts one of these altars: the main part in squared-off stone is surmounted by a coping and by horns of consecration. As for the offering table, which appeared in various shapes and dimensions, in stone or clay, with or without legs, it generally included a large hollow for liquid offerings or libations. The rim of one of these, from Phaistos, is incised with a repeated motif of bovines and spirals, illustrating the use made of it, that is, the offering of the blood of sacrificed animals. Another, at Mallia, bears unmistakable traces of fire, which relate it to combustion pits like the one found in the central court of the palace. Similar to the offering table were the stone blocks with numerous hollows. The most elaborate of these stones, in the palace of Mallia, is circular in form and provided with a deep central hollow and thirty-four peripheral ones: it was placed on a small terrace in the corner of the central court to receive the first fruits of the harvest, according to a rite that prefigures the *panspermia* of the Classical period.

Libation ceremonies were performed using jugs and special vases, or rhytons; these, either conical or ovoid in shape, were pierced at the bottom to let the liquid flow out. Several of these stone vases bear decorations in relief that demonstrate an undeniable relationship with the cult; others, in stone or terra-cotta, represent the head of an animal, a lioness or bull, the bull's head probably meant for the blood of that animal.

The sacrifice is a particular form of libation ceremony in which the poured liquid is the blood of the victim. The rest of the animal was burned, as is proved by the bones found in layers of deposit in sanctuaries or sacrificial pits. The bull was the sacrificial animal *par excellence* in accordance with a tradition deeply rooted in the Near Eastern past; at the end of acrobatic bull games it must have been put to death with a double ax, probably in the central court of the palace. As for human sacrifice, in the absence of any incontestable data, one can only observe that the Cretans seem to have practiced it in one form or another, if the legend of Theseus and the Minotaur is to be believed.

Ritual processions ordinarily accompanied the offering of gifts to the divinity. Both on a fragment of a stone vase and on the walls of the Knossian palace, a file of hieratic figures carry cups and rhytons. Processions may also have borne the god's statue or the high priest in the oriental manner in a palanquin, as in the terracotta model discovered at Knossos, or the palanquin represented in a fresco painting. In this respect the stone-paved causeways that cross the western esplanades of the palaces seem to mark the requisite approaches to the main entrances and central court: thus at Knossos one of these walks leads to the West Porch, where the Corridor of the Procession begins, named after the paintings that decorate its walls. On a stone rhyton from Hagia Triada called the Harvesters' Vase, peasants carrying pitchforks on their shoulders march joyously to the music of a sistrum, led by a curious figure dressed in a cloak of scales, a prefiguration, in a way, of the Attic *kōmoi* of the Dionysian cult.

The dances often illustrated on intaglios and wall paintings were probably also ritual ceremonies. So famous were these dances in antiquity that Homer had them depicted on the shield of Achilles. The relationship between cult and physical movement, even acrobatics, was even stronger than in the Near East. Various exercises, wrestling matches, and bullfights fit into this context. Bullfights clearly had a particular importance, to judge by the number of representations. Before the death of the bull, young boys and girls took part in dangerous competitions like the one depicted in the fresco from Knossos known as the Taureador Fresco: they would somersault over the back of the wild animal just as the inhabitants of Çatal Hüyük in Anatolia had done during the Neolithic period. The distant echo of these games has come down to us as the legend of Theseus, who came from Athens to be fed with other youths to the Minotaur.

The profound unity of these cult manifestations, apparently so diverse, seems to have been ensured by their link with the vegetation cycle. Evans (1901) supposed the existence of a veritable tree cult, and after him Axel W. Persson thought that he could recognize in Crete

traces of a New Year festival modeled on Oriental lines (*The Religion of Greece in Prehistoric Times*, 1942). We may assume in any case that the Minoan goddess was essentially a goddess of nature in all its forms—heavenly, earthly, subterranean, marine, animal, vegetal—of which she represented the creative force. In numerous scenes figures of men or women are seen dancing wildly, bowing low, or kneeling near a tree or small plants springing up from a shrine or a large pithos (earthenware cask); they seem to be celebrating successive episodes of the vegetation cycle: the birth, growth, and decline of nature, whose death induces funerary mourning on the part of the officiants.

Funerary Cult. It is in this light that the obvious link between divine worship and funerary cult in Minoan Crete must be understood. There was no fundamental difference between them; in practice, they were probably more or less indistinguishable. Pierre Demargne has rightly demonstrated, through the study of objects deposited in tombs, that the goddess of the dead and the goddess of fertility were one and the same (*Mélanges Gustave Glotz*, vol. 1, 1932, pp. 305–314). At Chryssolakkos, the princely necropolis of Mallia, one finds both a stone with hollows resembling the one in the palace, and a curious hollowed-out altar that seems to bring into close relationship, through the libation ritual, the world of the living and the world of the dead. The famous sarcophagus of Hagia Triada, from a rather late period, presents the most complete illustration of ceremonies in honor of the dead, which nothing differentiates from the usual cult ceremonies. On one side, near an altar associated with a basket of fruit and a libation pitcher and in front of a small shrine enclosing the sacred tree, a bull is sacrificed to the sound of a flute. On the other side of the sarcophagus, officiating priests and priestesses pour libations to the music of a harp and bring offerings to the dead person standing before his tomb. The scene is dominated by sacred signs: horns of consecration crowning the shrine, and double axes standing on their shafts and topped by birds. The same symbols, by themselves, are constantly represented on postpalatial sarcophagi, in combination with stylized flowers evoking the renewal of life. For the Cretans, as for every primitive mentality, the death of man is a normal part of the great cycle of nature, so that the same rites are necessary to bring about the rebirth of being and the revival of vegetation.

Mycenaean Religion

Nothing precise can be said about the divinities and cults of the continent before the Mycenaean period. The image of a fertility goddess seems to appear in the numerous representations from the Neolithic period of a naked female figure with hypertrophied forms, but the rites that were practiced are still unknown to us, in the absence of any cult installations. Even this image vanishes at the beginning of the Bronze Age, and thus the existence of a cult at this period, though probable, remains problematic until the appearance of the "shaft grave" culture in Mycenae and the rise of Minoan influence on the continent.

Data from the Tablets. For a long time no distinction was made between the Mycenaean and Minoan civilizations, especially where religion was concerned. Indeed, in the view of Evans (1921–1936), the Minoans imposed on the Mycenaeans their way of life, their art, their ideas, and their rites. Even though there was mounting opposition to this theory of colonization, Cretan influence was hardly disputed until the deciphering of the Linear B script in 1953, which threw a whole new light on the matter by revealing a pantheon entirely different from that of the Minoans.

The tablets inscribed in Linear B are economic documents and give only indirect indications about the religion, in the form of lists of offerings to a god. Still, it is clear that the supremacy of a great goddess is replaced in the Mycenaean world by that of a male god who bears the name of the great god of the Classical Greeks: Zeus. Around him the pantheon of Olympian divinities was already taking shape: Hera, Athana Potnia (Athena), Enyalios (Ares), Paiawon (Apollo), Poseidaon (Poseidon), perhaps even Hermes and Dionysos; the hierarchies are not identical, however, as Poseidon played a preeminent role at Pylos. Some of these gods seem to mask older divinities whose attributes they took over. At Knossos, Zeus Diktaios ("of Mount Dikte") appears to have had the functions of the goddess of Mount Dikte, Diktynna, while the name *Potnia* ("lady, mistress"), used without other qualification, seems to express the personality of the Great Mother of pre-Hellenic days. As for the "Lady of the Labyrinth," her appellation apparently relates her to the palace of Knossos.

The offerings listed were varied and the quantities often considerable, in particular vegetable products such as barley, olives, and wine. Also offered were animals—cattle, sheep, and pigs—and humans of both sexes, as well as objects of value. As for the religious ceremonies, these remain for the most part obscure: in addition to offerings, mention is made of human sacrifices that are probably reflected in Greek mythology.

One term has been variously interpreted: *wa-na-ka*. It is undeniable that it constitutes the prototype of the word *anax*, which in the Homeric poems is usually applied to the chief of the Achaeans, Agamemnon. But on certain tablets it seems to be the epithet of a god, which

has led some to the bold supposition that the Mycenaean king might have been divine in nature.

Archaeological Data. The image that archaeology gives of the Mycenaean religion is no closer to Minoan reality. None of the great types of Cretan sanctuaries has been detected in continental Greece other than perhaps a peak sanctuary on Mount Kinortion at Epidaurus, and possible natural places of worship characterized by hoards of figurines remote from any constructions (the sanctuary of Marmaria at Delphi). The Mycenaean palace presents none of the features of the palaces of Crete: it is built not around a central court but around an enclosed hall or *megaron* to which a religious function, among others, must be attributed. Preceded by a two-columned porch between the antas and by a shallow vestibule, it anticipates the ground plan of the first Greek temples. In the center was a great circular hearth. At Pylos, near the royal throne, a drain joining two cavities together might have been used to receive libations. In addition, small offering tables were found under the porch or near the hearth. It is very likely, therefore, that the royal palace was the principal place of worship in the Mycenaean city, and that the king, though his divine nature remains subject to controversy, played a significant role in the ceremonies. At Mycenae, as if to emphasize this idea, the great gateway to the citadel that enclosed the palace was decorated with an eloquent relief: rearing face to face, two lions, their forepaws resting on a small Cretan altar, symmetrically flank a column with its capital, the sacralized symbol of the palace and of royal power.

However, sanctuaries did exist independently of the palaces, as the discovery of a true cult complex on the acropolis of Mycenae has recently proved. Located on the western slope not far from Grave Circle A, it consists of several sacred buildings with various installations for sacrifices, offerings, and libations. The "temple," comprising a vestibule, a cult room, and a raised annex accessible from an off-center staircase, has yielded an abundant series of figurines, mostly feminine, with raised arms and highly unusual characteristics: their heads, with strongly modeled features, are set on tubular bodies, and they are generally covered with a uniform layer of paint. The discovery of one of these in the main room on a stepped bench next to a small offering table shows their indisputably sacred character. Coiled clay snakes no doubt stress the chthonic aspect of the divinity represented. In a neighboring room, a fresco portrays a seated goddess holding two sheaves of wheat in a gesture that has no true parallel in Crete. Access to this religious quarter was afforded by a dog-legged processional approach, which demonstrates the importance of the area to the city. The arrangement

seems very different from the cult installations of Minoan Crete, and the *megaron* plan was widely used, recalling in humbler form the great hall of the royal palace.

Iconography. Mycenaean iconography remains, on the other hand, practically identical to that of Minoan Crete. In the royal graves of Grave Circle A, to be sure, the figure of a naked goddess surrounded by birds was discovered, associating the Cretan theme of a divine bird with ritual nudity, probably Oriental in origin and unknown in Crete. Yet in the same grave there was a silver pin with a gold head ornamented with a Cretan-type goddess in a flounced skirt and with bared breasts. Furthermore, at a later date human figures, animals, and symbols are so alike on the continent and in Crete that sometimes the best illustrations of certain incontestably Minoan scenes come from Mycenaean sites, such as the above-mentioned scene, on a ring from Mycenae, of the offering of gifts to the goddess. The goddess with the sheaves from the cult center is herself Cretan in spirit, even though she finds a closer parallel in an ivory carving from Minet-el-Beida in Syria. Yet everything leads one to believe that this iconographic repertoire covers a totally different reality. It is as if the Mycenaeans had disguised their relationship with the divinity in a language of symbols and themes borrowed from Crete, which for them were hardly more than material for artistic variations deprived of their original meaning.

Funerary Cult. The existence of a funerary cult on the continent appears much less certain than in Crete, even if one rejects the altogether negative position of G. E. Mylonas (1966). The concave altar found by Schliemann in Grave Circle A at Mycenae is undoubtedly associated with a late modification of the circle and attests to a cult of the dead only for the thirteenth century BCE. The expeditious treatment that the Mycenaeans usually inflicted on the oldest remains in the tombs bears witness to a fundamental impiety toward ancestors, whether of common or princely extraction. Concentrated around those great funerary constructions, the tholos graves, or beehive tombs, however, are signs of a particular veneration that seems to contain the seeds of the hero cult of the following period.

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of the Cycladic culture. The religious significance of the frescoes of Thera is analyzed with new documentation in the work of Nanno Marinatos, *Art and Religion in Thera* (Athens, 1984).

It is because of the wealth of iconographic material that the Minoan religion has been the most explored of the Aegean religions ever since the first discoveries of Arthur Evans in Crete. His first book, *The Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult and Its Mediterranean Relations* (London, 1901), brings together a good many scenes of which he proposes a coherent exegesis within the framework of a pillar and vegetation cult. His outstanding publication, *The Palace of Minos*, 4 vols. plus index (London, 1921–1936), remains to this day a fundamental work owing to the abundant material presented and the penetrating character of his analyses, even though they are biased toward a religious interpretation.

Martin P. Nilsson's great work, *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and Its Survival in Greek Religion* (1927), 2d ed. rev. (Lund, 1950), gives a systematic account of all the information available at that date and presents a more critical view of religious manifestations in the Aegean in the third and second millennia, but his observations are somewhat weakened by his assimilation of the Minoan with the Mycenaean religion. Another comprehensive review is Charles Picard's *Les religions préhelléniques: Crète et Mycènes* (Paris, 1948), which groups material on the question in a convenient fashion but without illustrations. Each of these works must be supplemented by the well-informed synthesis of Emily Townsend Vermeule, *Götterkult*, in volume 3 of "Archeologia Homerica" (Göttingen, 1974); the drafting of the text goes back to 1963 and does not take into account the latest discoveries, in particular those of the frescoes of Thera and the cult center of Mycenae.

The interpretations of Evans, already discussed by Nilsson, have been strongly challenged by new analyses of archaeological data tending toward a more or less complete desacralization of the installations or architectural structures considered by him as sacred. This tendency is particularly noticeable in the article of Luisa Banti, "I culti minoici e greci di Haghia Triada (Creta)," *Annuario della Scuola Archeologica di Atene* 3–5 (1941–1943): 9–74, and in the work of Bogdan Rutkowski, *Cult Places in the Aegean World* (Wroclaw, 1972).

In addition, new iconographic studies of the rich repertoire of Minoan representations with a religious character have been made by Friedrich Matz in his *Göttererscheinung und Kultbild im minoischen Kreta* (Wiesbaden, 1958), and more recently by Rutkowski in his *Frühgriechische Kultdarstellungen* (Berlin, 1981). The relationship between the Aegean and the Greek religions, already studied by Nilsson, was reexamined for Crete by R. F. Willetts in *Cretan Cults and Festivals* (New York, 1963) and, with the addition of Oriental antecedents, by B. C. Dietrich in *The Origins of Greek Religion* (Berlin and New York, 1974).

The great discovery in the field of Aegean religions has been the deciphering of the Linear B script by Michael Ventris and John Chadwick in 1953; its repercussions on our knowledge of the Mycenaean religion are brought to the fore in their joint publication, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek* (Cambridge, 1959). Since that date, commentaries of limited scope have been devoted to the Mycenaean religion in the context of more general

works, such as George E. Mylonas's *Mycenae and the Mycenaean Age* (Princeton, 1966), Chadwick's *The Mycenaean World* (Cambridge, 1976), and J. T. Hooker's *Mycenaean Greece* (London, 1976). Following the discoveries made in Mycenae by Lord William Taylour and himself, Mylonas has drawn up a useful review of all the findings on the question as far as architecture is concerned, *Mycenaean Religion: Temples, Altars, and Temenea*, in volume 39 of *Proceedings of the Academy of Athens* (Athens, 1977).

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AESTHETICS. [*This entry comprises two articles. The first,* Philosophical Aesthetics, *explores philosophical arguments concerning the relation of aesthetic and religious experience. The second,* Visual Aesthetics, *examines perceptual and cognitive aspects of visual imagery. For discussion of particular systems of religious imagery, see* Iconography.]

Philosophical Aesthetics

Many elements appear common to aesthetic and religious experience. Both are modes of apprehending and articulating reality. Theorists of both have affirmed that aesthetic and religious insights, or intuitions, afford direct, nonconceptual apprehension of the real and are dependent on inspiration, genius, or other forms of giftedness. Both issue in forms, objects, and activities expressive of specific visions of reality that are frequently, though not exclusively, nondiscursive. In both realms, questions and criteria of judgment entail distinctive relations of particularity to universality and of matter to form in appraisals of truth. Further, both art and religion have sometimes exemplified and sometimes countered prevailing views of reality. In each realm, protocols of style and canons of authority emerge generically, appealing to disciplines internal to experience. Thus, by examining aesthetic characteristics and considering the possible relations of aesthetic insight to religious truth and beatitude proposed by a number of seminal thinkers, we may achieve an enhanced understanding of religion as the apprehension and expression of distinctive experience.

Classical Formulations. Aesthetics, like theory of religion, did not emerge as a discrete discipline in the West until the eighteenth century, in the wake of the Enlightenment. In the East, it was largely a secondary product of the practice of art until Eastern philosophers were influenced by modern Western thought. Yet Plato (c. 429–347 BCE) is in some respects the founder of philosophical aesthetics, having developed concepts

central to subsequent reflection on the aesthetic. Foremost is that of art itself—*technē*, or know-how: the recognition of an end to be aimed at and the knowledge how best to achieve it through the skillful use of appropriate materials and means. *Poiesis*, Plato's term for aesthetic making, broadly designates all craftsmanship and more narrowly refers to the making of poems, plays, pictures, or sculptures. *Poiesis* is the verb used in the Septuagint version of the Bible for the divine "making" or creation of the world proclaimed in the *Book of Genesis.* Through this association of divine creativity with human creativity in received religious texts, later Western theologian-philosophers would be encouraged to incorporate elements of Platonic theory into their reflections upon the nature of the good, true, and beautiful. Platonic theory thus affected Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions and persisted in the philosophical disciplines that emerged from the Enlightenment.

For Plato (*Philebus* 64e), the evaluation of *poiesis* requires a sense of proper proportion of means and ends, of "measure" *(summetrica)*. The concept of measure, or standard, became central to his thought as he sought to identify the standards of truth, justice, beauty, and goodness, which he also called the Forms, or Ideas. The concept of measure suggested the possibility of a Form of Forms, a prior source of reality and human beatitude, that could be termed religious and was considered such by some successors.

For Plato, the highest form of art is that of the divine maker *(demiurgos)* who composes the universe as an "imitation" *(mimesis)* of ultimate and unchanging Forms. Practitioners of the "fine arts," however, engage in imitations that are more complex and more problematic. In this *poiesis*, moral, psychological, and other factors color a more vivid rendering of reality through appearance. Plato therefore distrusted artists' claims to knowledge and was wary of the moral and political effects of epic and drama. He advocated a form of censorship by philosopher-guardians of the state and distinguished between true imitation *(eitastikē)* and false semblance *(phantastikē)*, or illusion.

Plato also held that something in true art is not reducible to know-how. The poet, it appears, is inspired, "a holy, winged thing," and his achievement, insofar as it cannot be reduced to rules by the normal, conscious intellect, appears to be a form of madness. The poet imitates the divine *demiurgos* (*Phaedrus* 245, *Ion* 523–525). Plato's dialogue the *Symposium* both describes and exemplifies the ascent of the soul to the vision of the Good through the allure of the Beautiful. The Beautiful is the chief propaedeutic to the Good, which is the Form of Forms, the end, also, of the religious quest.

Thus we see in Plato concepts central to the relation of aesthetics to religion. The conviction that aesthetic vision is also religious apprehension appears in Jewish wisdom literature and in early Christian theology and is consonant with some Hindu and Buddhist accounts of salvific knowledge. Plato's emphasis on the discernment of measure and fittingness is echoed in some forms of Confucian philosophy as well. *Poiesis* is a metaphor for the relation of the divine to the world in the cosmogonies of many religious traditions. In some Hindu speculation, all that is only penultimately real, *māyā*, or illusion, is said to be the "sport" or "play" *(līlā)* of the ultimately real *(brahman).* In many religions of archaic societies, poetic or prophetic (shamanistic) inspiration is a means to perception of the sacred, that which is foundational to and constitutive of ordinary or profane space and time and which is articulated in accounts of events *in illo tempore.*

Aristotle (384–322 BCE), like Plato, saw art as the capacity to "make," to cause the coming-into-being of ends set by reason. The character of the envisioned end *(telos)* determines the appropriate means for its realization. For Aristotle, however, the forms (patterns or essences of things) do not exist apart from the materials formed, except, perhaps, in the case of those ultimate ends, or "reasons-why," that reason may contemplate. It is in the capacity for such contemplation, Aristotle says, that human beings are most godlike and therefore perhaps immortal *(Nichomachean Ethics).* While some things in nature occur by reason of the material that constitutes them, that is, by "necessity," the primary causes of all events are the ends to which they lead and for which they appear to be designed. There is a sense, therefore, in which for Aristotle nature is best understood as imitating art. The source of all processes is an Unmoved Mover whose ultimacy was taken by later theologians to be of religious significance.

Excellence or beauty in a work of art depends upon immanent standards: perfection of form and felicity of method, which render a work both a satisfying whole in itself and fruitful in its effects. A composition must exhibit symmetry, harmony, and definiteness. Aristotle's only sustained treatment of aesthetic issues, the *Poetics*, focuses on one form, tragic drama. Like Plato, he saw literary and dramatic *poietikē* as mimetic. Unlike Plato, however, he believed that tragic drama may be a definitive means of knowing reality, through the presentation of philosophical truth and psychological insight in character, plot, and action. Tragedy arouses the emotions of fear and pity, but the well-made tragedy effects both a therapeutic purgation of these from the soul of the spectator and a resolution in the drama itself that

is akin to ritual purification. Indeed, it may be said that Aristotle saw in the art of tragedy the natural development of religious media that seek to negotiate the ambiguities and paradoxes of life, with their associated feelings of awe and guilt. For some who today find traditional religious resolutions anachronistic, irrelevant, or superficial, expressions of the tragic in art serve important religious purposes, as the irrational or nonrational dimensions of life are re-presented and lived through aesthetically.

Plotinus (205–270 CE), in the *Enneads* (1.6, 5.8, 6.7), incorporates a Platonic vision of ascent into his understanding of contemplation as active and productive of a form of knowledge. His Neoplatonism decisively influenced the formulation of Christian doctrine and shaped mystical expression in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions through the Middle Ages. Elements of his metaphysics were subsequently resurrected by Italian Renaissance humanists, by seventeenth-century Platonists of the Cambridge school, and by nineteenth-century German Romantics.

For Latin Christianity, Augustine (354–430) gave the Neoplatonic tradition the form it would retain through most of the Middle Ages. Augustine saw the arts not simply as an embellishment of explicitly religious materials, but as a direct means of participation in the divine. Human art, when guided by divine will, may reflect the art of the divine, as in numerical proportion, rhythm, and harmony (*De musica* and *De ordine* 11–16). In keeping with his exaltation of auditory art, he exemplified and fostered a characteristically Latin attention to rhetorical forms of expression. While Greek Christianity tended to prize visual representations and look to liturgical praxis for the development of doctrine, Western theological reflection explored a multilevel textual hermeneutic in which metaphor, parable, and other narrative forms are seen as vehicles of revelation. Augustine applied that tradition not only to scripture (*On Christian Doctrine* 3, 10.14, 15.23) but also, in *The Confessions*, to the life of an individual seen as an operation of divine grace. John Cassian (c. 365–c. 435) formulated a fourfold distinction between levels of scriptural meaning that became standard in the Middle Ages and influenced the development of modern literary criticism. [*See* Icons; Biblical Exegesis, *article on* Christian Views; *and* Literature, *article on* Literature and Religion.]

Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225–1274) also turned to scripture and Christian tradition for ultimate authority, relating them, however, to the newly recovered philosophical teachings of Aristotle. Every being *(ens)*, he said, is one *(unum)*, true *(verum)*, and good *(bonum)*, terms that apply to different beings variously, according to their natures. Religious language, or talk of the divine being in terms of the finite, is possible by analogy, or proportion, as the created order displays the character of its origin. Truth is the equation of thought and thing, and good is fulfillment of desire in the truly desirable beauty. Contemplation of the good as beautiful renders knowledge of the Good, because in it the soul resonates with the divine form. The beautiful is marked by integrity, proportion, harmony, and clarity. Thomas's doctrine of analogy and his emphasis on the revelatory character of the created order played major roles in subsequent theological development and in Thomist and Neo-Thomist accounts of the relation of aesthetics to religion (cf. *Summa theologiae* 1.13.5, 1.16.1, 1.5.4, 2.1.27.1).

Enlightenment and Post-Enlightenment Formulations. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century developments in "natural philosophy" undercut the authority not only of Western religious traditions, identified as they were with a discredited cosmology, but also of Platonic idealism and Aristotelian scientific method. In the "enlightenment" that followed, the sense-bound character of all experience became problematic in a new way; definitions and criteria had to be developed for subjective experiences that could not be quantified. Chief among these were experiences of the beautiful and of the holy. The use of such terms as *feeling* and *sensibility* and attempts to articulate the variety of subject-object transactions characterized this debate. The relation of feeling or sensibility to a variety of forms of subject-object transactions to the good and true was explored in terms of religious theory by some and in terms of aesthetic theory by others. Still others sought to bring both art and religion under a comprehensive theory.

Although Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714–1762) coined the term *aesthetics* in 1750, Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) was the first to develop a systematic theory of aesthetics as an integral, if not foundational, part of a philosophical system. Kant set himself the task of answering three questions: "What can I know?"; "What ought I to do?"; and "For what may I hope?" In *Critique of Pure Reason* he focused on imagination, whose work he traced from basic intuition, or awareness of bare sensation, localized in the forms of space and time, to the reproduction of images schematized under "the categories of the understanding": quantity, quality, relation, and modality. These categories yield determinate concepts, expressed in propositions, analytic and synthetic, in the context of the "transcendental unity of apperception," or self-world consciousness. Such is all that the "faculty" of understanding can sup-

ply, and all that we can know in a sense warranted by the regnant conception of science. Yet "reason" requires the "transcendental ideas," or "regulative ideals," not only of self, or soul, and world, but also of God as ground of world and soul.

When we turn from the data of nature to the datum of freedom, of persons as moral agents, the dictates of "pure practical reason" (praxis) reveal a "categorical imperative": never to make an exception of oneself to the demand of moral law; to treat all persons as ends and never merely as means; to recognize the moral dignity of persons as persons. In exploring the demands of moral life in *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant asks how disinterested moral virtue is to be related to the quest for happiness, which is also a legitimate component of the supreme good. A rational answer to this question, says Kant, demands the recognition of freedom adjudicated by God in immortality.

A basic power assumed in the first two critiques, namely judgment, operates to subsume particulars in generals, parts in wholes, and so forth. Judgment is evidenced in acts, including logical operations, and expressed in the propositions of theoretical reason and the moral determinations of practical reason. In *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment*, however, Kant seeks to lay bare the general power of judgment as such. Here its form is expressive of pure feeling, of pleasure or displeasure. The controlling aesthetic category, beauty, is experienced when the free play of imagination, articulated in aesthetic forms, results in a "delight in ordering" produced by the creative artist and enjoyed by persons of aesthetic sensibility and informed taste. Feeling, however, is neither its cause nor its differentiating characteristic. Feeling merely signals that aesthetic judgment is at work.

Aesthetic judgment is characterized by four "moments." (1) In quality, the grounding experience is that of "disinterested interest." The judging subject is fully engaged, but the focus of engagement is neither the self nor the fascination of being engaged, but that whose worth is not a function of the act of engagement. (2) In quantity, judgment of the beautiful is singular, yet of universal import. There is no class of which all beautiful objects are members; a specific work of art is judged to be beautiful. (Religious expressions of the unqualified singularity of the divine display a similar resistance to systematic formulation or classification.) (3) In terms of relation, aesthetic judgment expresses "purposiveness without purpose," or "finality without use." Parts are also wholes, and wholes, parts; means are also ends, and ends, means. This suggests analogies with religious judgment concerning the integrity or wholeness of the

holy. (4) In modality, aesthetic judgments are subjective and particular, yet also necessary and universal. Here the judgment bespeaks a universality and necessity that its logical form as analyzed in the first critique denies to judgments of particulars. This "given" of aesthetic judgment, Kant said, may suggest a *sensus communis*, a universal structure of intersubjectivity. Some theorists of religion appear to designate a similar structure as the *sensus numinous*, a universal sense of the holy or sacred.

Kant also examined another category of aesthetic experience, the sublime. While beauty is formal, limited, and related to discursive understanding, the sublime is experienced variously as the infinite or the overpowering. It arrests attention, "performs an outrage on imagination," and seems to draw us into a supra-empirical or supernatural realm. For Kant, this experience is not mystical intuition and affords no privileged access to what lies beyond the world of appearances. Some successors, however, did associate the experience of sublimity with the experience of the holy. [*See* Sublime, The.]

Friedrich Schelling (1775–1845), pursuing an aspect of Kant's thought as amended by J. G. Fichte (1762–1814), produced a philosophy of seminal influence on literary figures like Samuel Taylor Coleridge and theologians like Paul Tillich (1886–1965). Schelling's philosophy of identity appropriated Kant's notion of aesthetic purposiveness as that which makes scientific inquiry intelligible, but while this was only a regulative principle for Kant, it became for Schelling the objective determining principle of reality. In the *System of Transcendental Idealism*, he affirmed that "intellectual or rational intuition" reveals the ultimate identity of thought and being, real and ideal. In art, he said, a fleeting glimpse of this harmony or identity is made fully objective. Philosophy, therefore, should ultimately pass over from reflection on art to become art itself. Even art, however, cannot fully express reality as understood in Schelling's final "positive" philosophy and in his philosophy of mythology and revelation. Positive philosophy, which asserts the primacy of will, is said to be verified in the actual history of religions, which points toward an "age of the spirit" in which all is fulfilled. The function of art is thus replaced by the history of religions.

For Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834), as for Schelling, philosophy begins in a "realizing intuition," an act of contemplation that is both theoretical and practical, the coincidence of subject and object on which all knowledge rests and to which all knowledge aspires. Here knowing and doing and making, science

and art, are least distinguishable. Coleridge's theory of imagination is central to his understanding of this basic apprehension. Primary imagination, he says in *Biographia literaria*, is the "living power and prime agent of all human perception, and a representation in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM" (Coleridge, 1956, p. 86). Secondary imagination differs from primary only in degree and mode of operation but is similarly creative, seeking "to idealize and unify." From this basic characterization springs Coleridge's theories of poetry, symbol, and religion. Religion, he says, "unites in its purposes the desiderata of the speculative and practical being; its acts, including its events, are truths and objects of philosophical insight, and *vice versa* the truths of which it consists are to be considered the acts and manifestations of that Being who is at once Power and Truth" (Coleridge, 1956, p. 167).

G. W. F. Hegel (1770–1831) aspired to complete the movement of modern philosophy toward a conception of reality as Mind, or Spirit. In his *Philosophy of Fine Art* he treated art and religion as authentic expressions of Spirit, whose concrete development, portrayed in his historical dialectic, would finally be superseded in true philosophy. Art, he said, is the sensuous appearance *(Schein)* of Idea, or the Real (Spirit). It seeks to give rich concreteness to unfolding reality; in it a concept shows itself for itself. Its earliest form, Hegel thought, is the "symbolic." In classical art, whose consummate form is sculpture, the divine is expressed through the perfection of the human form. Classical art, however, betrays its inadequacy for the expression of Spirit in the very concreteness of its forms. In the Romantic arts of painting, music, and poetry, Spirit is exhibited in increasing purity; in poetry, the art of sounded imaginative concepts, it achieves its most powerful artistic expression. This theme has been elaborated by poet-critics like T. S. Eliot and others. Religion, thought Hegel, is a historically parallel manifestation of the Real, in that it vivifies the Real as God in myth, ritual, and theology. Indeed, the God of Romantic art, he seems to suggest, is the God of Christianity. With full disclosure of the way the Real as Spirit works in the dialectic of history, the eclipse of art and religion in their historical forms had, he thought, begun.

Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855) reacted vigorously against Hegel's views of the ultimate character of reality and of the place of the aesthetic and religious in its perception. Truth, he said, is not the objective working out of Idea, Reason, or Spirit; a logical system is possible, but there can be no logical system of personal life as it is actually lived, of "existence." Truth is a matter not of *what*, but of *how* one thinks, as displayed in the engaged conduct of a life. Truth is an existential grasp of "essence," arrived at not by logical conclusion but by life-committing choice.

Three major valuations of life, he said, are open to truth-seeking choice, or the quest for authentic existence: the aesthetic, the ethical, and the religious. The grounding principle of the aesthetic, which may include all forms of human making, is enjoyment. The aesthetic is basically ahistorical because its fulfillments are only accidentally related to temporal and spatial situations. It involves less than the whole person; its criterion is that of fittingness, or definition. As life-orientation, the aesthetic is ironic because it expresses only the individual as he or she is, rather than positing a task for indefinite striving. Dependent for its satisfactions on the vagaries of fortune and taste, it leads, he said, to "the despair of not willing to be oneself."

In the ethical perspective one experiences the dignity of the whole self and the equality of persons before the moral law; the moral imperative does set a task for unending pursuit. Herein, however, lies the irony of the ethical: one can always do more than is required by or consonant with moral law, or one experiences the impossibility of complete obedience to moral law as guilt, leading to "the despair of willing to be oneself despairingly."

It is within the religious perspective, Kierkegaard thought, that authenticity is to be experienced. Christian faith in particular entails the most inward and passionate, and therefore the most complete, engagement of the self, because it is committed to an absurdity: that the infinite became finite, that God became a historical person. This commitment, which is also openness to divine forgiveness and grace, restores the individual to the realm of authentic finitude. For Kierkegaard, the aesthetic, like the ethical, is not abandoned or denied in the religious attitude; it is fully affirmed and enjoyed, but in its proper place and not as a way of salvation. Other modern existentialists have found something approaching religious significance in various aesthetic forms, even though for many the authenticity proclaimed therein is that of the tragic vision, or of unredeemed and unredeeming absurdity.

Aesthetic and Religious Experience. Like Plotinus, who spoke of the beauties of the world as "graceful" and "gracious," Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) sought to unite a theory of perception with one of divine grace. Incorporating Newtonian science as interpreted by John Locke into John Calvin's doctrine of divine sovereignty, he suggested that we turn to the "religious affections" for understanding of the religious life. Religious assur-

ance is a matter of deep commitment, resulting from the experience of divine grace and manifested in works of charity. In *Images or Shadows of Divine Things*, he attempts to provide a base and medium for knowledge of the divine that is at least as sensory as the data of natural science. This mode of apprehension he calls "sensibility," and the chief form of its expression, "beauty." As Coleridge would with imagination, Edwards distinguishes between primary and secondary forms of beauty. Primary beauty he defines as "Being's cordial consent to being," theologically identified as the gracious God. Neither static nor substantial, it is *beautifying*, and is manifested in the creative ordering of the natural and human realms that may result in beatitude. This activity is essentially social: internally, it is the loving society of the Trinity; externally, it is that work of grace leading to the perfect (and perfectly beautiful) society traditionally called the city of God. The transcendence and sovereignty of God is the power of his love understood as beauty; his immanence, in turn, consists in his presence as immediately related to everything that has being. "Secondary beauty," that is, all harmonious forms discovered in nature and cherished in society, is discerned through "natural sensibility," whose cohering agent is affection. Natural sensibility, however, does not enable the self to perceive and participate in the primary beauty that is God. For this, a transformed and transforming "spiritual sensibility" is needed. Such is the work of divine grace, through which humans may "glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1831) also turned to the life of affections or feeling to identify and celebrate the religious in his *Speeches on Religion to Its Cultured Despisers*. A brilliant preacher, hermeneut, translator of Plato, and teacher, Schleiermacher was identified with the circle of German Romantic artists whose attention to the affective dominated their work. Religion, he affirmed, is not primarily a matter of beliefs or of divine undergirding of moral law; it is rooted in a distinctive feeling, which he variously designated "the feeling of absolute dependence," "the sense of the Whole," or, in his later work, *The Christian Faith*, "the sense and taste for the Infinite." Religious apprehension is akin, he said, to the experience of the sublime as described by Kant. While for Kant, however, the experience of the sublime bespeaks finally the dignity of man, for Schleiermacher it is a key to the experience of God. In the figure of Jesus as the Christ, he said, one sees exemplary God-consciousness, or complete transparency to the divine.

Rudolf Otto (1869–1937), whose *Idea of the Holy* decisively influenced developments in the theory of religion, was himself strongly influenced by both Schleier-

macher and aspects of Kantian philosophy. Otto's book calls attention to nonrational dimensions of the holy, which is viewed as the distinctive religious category. Rational characterizations of the holy are expressed in conceptual superlatives (supreme being, supernatural, etc.) and other conceptual absolutes. A sense of its reality, however, must be evoked rather than rationally demonstrated, just as a sense of the aesthetic must be. The aesthetic realm thus provides for Otto the chief analogies for modes of apprehending the dimension of the holy that he termed "the numinous," the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*. This realm of mystery is both awesomely overpowering and the source of that fascination that leads, through the history of religions, to beatitude. "Divination" (Otto's term for the discernment of the numinous), like aesthetic intuition, operates through the senses. The expressions of such discernments, like those of aesthetic intuition, may be nonconceptual or idiosyncratically conceptual ("ideograms"); they may issue directly in sound, light, darkness, or holy silence or be conveyed indirectly through music, poetry, or other art forms. The closest analogue to that which is so expressed, said Otto, is the sublime as described by Kant, though without Kant's critical restrictions.

The subtle relation of apprehension to articulation, or of intuition to expression, in aesthetic experience was influentially formulated by Benedetto Croce (1866–1952), who identified intuition with expression as aspects of the same phenomenon. [*See* Intuition.] R. G. Collingwood (1899–1943), who introduced Croce to English readers, used this identification to describe the relation of the aesthetic and of art to religion. In *Speculum mentis*, he places religion between art and science on the map of knowledge. Its location engenders special problems for religious discourse, he says, because such discourse seeks to be both intuitional and assertive. Just as art is untranslatable because its meaning is completely submerged or contained in the form of beauty and flood of imagery, so "religion cannot translate itself . . . because . . . it thinks that it has expressed this meaning already. And so it has, but only metaphorically; and this metaphorical self-expression . . . requires translation. . . ." This dilemma is symbolized in religion by the concept of faith. Faith "is that knowledge of ultimate truth which, *owing to its intuitive or imaginative form*, cannot justify itself under criticism" (Collingwood, 1924, pp. 129–132). Thus, for Collingwood faith should not attempt to justify itself discursively if it is to maintain its integrity. Ultimate clarification of the forms of apprehension of the real occurs through philosophy. Collingwood, however, like the analytic philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, saw the

task of philosophy as clarification only; so far as knowledge is concerned, said Wittgenstein, philosophy "leaves everything as it is."

Gerardus van der Leeuw (1890–1950), whose *Religion in Essence and Manifestation* influenced many theorists of religion, describes the "phenomenological" stance in terms strikingly similar to those employed by some in describing the aesthetic attitude. Phenomenology of religion, he asserts, is not philosophy of religion, insofar as it "brackets" questions of religion's relation to reality and truth. It is not "poetry" of religion, because it seeks to understand what is expressed through its poetry. The phenomenologist of religion, rather, seeks "lovingly to gaze" on that which is to be understood and, through understanding, cherished. Schleiermacher had said that the historical forms of religion are to religion as such as the various forms of music are to music as such. Van der Leeuw sought to comprehend the temporal and cultural diversity of religious expressions through the exercise of "surrendering love," a sympathetic mode of cognition "linking old and new."

Mircea Eliade (1907–1986) frequently described his monumental work as history or science of religion, but the stance he commends is in part that of the phenomenologist. However, it is not simply a matter of "gazing at" or resonating with apparently alien religious forms. *Homo religiosus* is universal. Understanding the diversity of experience of the sacred requires trained sensitivity to the forms and functions of the sacred, many of which are explicitly aesthetic in character. Whether there is or could be in modernity a complete loss of the sense of the sacred is for him problematic; if such a loss did occur, it would be comparable to, though more fundamental than, the loss of aesthetic sensitivity or orientation in relation to works of art.

Some modern philosophers, eschewing traditional formulations of religious faith, have found an analogue in the aesthetic. George Santayana (1863–1952), poet, essayist, and novelist as well as professional philosopher, keyed his understanding of verifiable knowledge to a conception of science that, he believed, portrayed the world as an insensate, mechanical arrangement of atoms, one preexisting human consciousness and destined to continue after human consciousness has disappeared. Spirit is unable to rearrange the forces of nature basically or permanently, or to eliminate the exigencies of life. From within the perspective of spirit, however, persons may perceive these exigencies as necessities of existence, and experience a transmutation of them "under the aspect of eternity." The gifts of the spirit entail more, however, than the passive acquiescence in fortune. Imagination may envision and affirm ideal values that become goals of highest human aspi-

ration and sources of endless delight, even though (or perhaps because) they are never fully incarnate in the realm of existence. Chief among these is beauty, which exemplifies the ideal harmony that is the good. A life conducted in the presence of these ideals is eternal because the ideals that thus constitute its essence are eternal. They are not everlasting: they are timeless. Partially embodied in aesthetic experience and vivified in the religious life, they provide for human beings another world in which to live, one that celebrates the distinctively human dimension of the real. Religion is poetry that guides life.

John Dewey (1859–1952) held a quite different understanding of scientific inquiry and its implications for life and society. Patterns of inquiry, beginning in doubt or problem and moving through experiment to resolution, are not limited to cognitively problematic situations in which we "do not know what to think." They are also exhibited in morally problematic situations, in which we "do not know what to do." The latter may be resolved through careful discrimination between the temporal ends of courses of action and the ends-as-goals of moral aspiration, that is, between the desired and the desirable. We are justified, Dewey thought, in choosing those ends that enlarge the range of possible fulfillments.

The aesthetic in experience is that which makes any experience *an* experience. In experience as aesthetic, exemplified in those experiential achievements we call works of art, the continuities of form and matter and of creative initiation and aesthetic consummation are presented directly. Experience as aesthetic is consummatory and a good in itself. In the creation and enjoyment of a work of art we gain new perspectives on and energy for the pursuit of all other forms of experience. The sense of communion generated by a work of art, says Dewey, may take on a definitely religious quality, in what one interpreter has called "the religion of shared experience." In aesthetic experience thus understood nature achieves its human culmination.

Dewey also understood the religious in experience in terms of adapting nature to human ends and accommodating human life to those aspects of it that cannot be changed. In *A Common Faith*, he describes the religious in experience as expressing the deepest and most pervasive of accommodations: faith as basic confidence, which may sustain the envisagement of ideals and religious commitment to their realization. Indeed, Dewey argues, one may use the term *God* to express the active relation of ideal to actual. The sense of belonging to a whole, he says in *Art as Experience*, is "the explanation of that feeling of exquisite intelligibility and clarity which we have in the presence of an object experienced

with esthetic intensity . . . it explains the religious feeling that accompanies intense esthetic perception. We are, as it were, introduced into a world beyond this world which is nevertheless the deeper reality of the world in which we live in ordinary experience. We are carried beyond ourselves to find ourselves" (Dewey, 1959, p. 195).

We have noted that Eastern philosophers did not attend to the systematic development of comprehensive aesthetic theories until these were incorporated in influential Western systems. This does not mean, however, that profound reflection on aspects of aesthetic theory in relation to religious experience is not present in many classical Eastern texts. Ananda Coomaraswamy (1877–1947), a pioneer in introducing Eastern art and aesthetics to Western communities, incorporated many of these reflections in an original and influential theory that he described, in *Christian and Oriental Philosophy of Art,* as a "doctrine of art intrinsic to the Philosophia Perennis." Its major themes, he thought, are expressed in Aristotelian, Neoplatonic, and other philosophies foundational to medieval Christian thought and culture, and also in Indian, Buddhist, and Confucian classics. Central to his analysis is the view that all true art is iconographic; authentic art forms and objects are to be understood as media for embodying and transmitting "ideas," or spiritual meanings. Authentic experience of a work of art requires appropriate preparation of both artist and experiencer for the work and its appreciation, and it results in a transformation of the percipient. The supreme achievement of individual consciousness is to lose or find itself in what is both its beginning and its end. The transformation of the artifact also effects the transformation of the artist and the percipient. The object/subject of apprehension is an imaged idea that moves the will and attracts the intellect of the artist; the idea is the source of the formation expressed in and through the work of art. Universal themes and motifs, or archetypes, he thought, are expressed in varying ways in great art, whether literary, plastic, or performed.

Traditional cultures, according to Coomaraswamy, exhibit a continuity between those values associated with fine art and those associated with the crafts of daily life. In these cultures, whose ideal forms are portrayed by Plato, Aristotle, and Augustine, as well as in Vedic, Buddhist, and Confucian writings, a harmony of social function flows from a common vision of human good. In commending a classical philosophy of art, therefore, Coomaraswamy believed he was also offering a critique of modern aesthetic theory and culture and affirming a vision of human good and community toward which both should strive. Modern aesthetic the-

ory, he said, errs in placing the ground and goal of such experience in the life of feeling; true art is ultimately ideational and cognitive. To prize aesthetic satisfaction as an end in itself is a form of idolatry or dehumanization, a misuse of symbols. Ultimate human apprehension of the real transcends even the experience of the beauty of the good; completed in contemplation, it should both guide and perfect human life. Coomaraswamy called for "a rectification of humanity itself" and a consequent awareness of the priority of contemplation over action.

In so criticizing modernity, Coomaraswamy did not regard himself as reactionary. Prophets, we may be reminded, are typically "radical," understanding their messages as calls to return to the roots *(radix)* of human good. His work thus exemplifies a confluence of priestly and prophetic functions in both art and religion. Both realms are celebrative and transforming; both articulate and effect visions of human life and beatitude. While "the secularisation of art and the rationalisation of religion" may be "inseparably connected," as Coomaraswamy (1956) claimed, humanists like Santayana and Dewey espouse many of the same goals for art and religion that for him are highlighted in classical philosophies. Many themes of his philosophy are exhibited in the work of some modern artists. Through such endeavors we may be moving toward the realization of André Malraux's vision of a "museum without walls" and a global society in which sensitivity to the intimate relation of aesthetics to religion engenders understanding and a deeper appreciation of the religious traditions of humankind.

[*See also the biographies of philosophers and theologians mentioned herein.*]

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James Alfred Martin, Jr.

Visual Aesthetics

An article on the application of visual aesthetics to religion might be expected to concentrate on paintings and sculpture with religious subject matter as well as on architecture designed for religious functions. Such an article, however, would duplicate a monograph on sacred art. The following discussion undertakes in a more general way to describe some basic perceptual and cognitive aspects of visual imagery and to examine their effects on religious art. Particularly relevant to this discussion are forms of art and kinds of religion not bound to traditional legendary subject matter.

Visual imagery defines the things and events of our world by their perceptual appearance. To be sure, perceptual characteristics are supplemented by all kinds of knowledge, but since such knowledge conveys only indirect information, it is less immediately effective. Images act primarily not by what we know but by what strikes the eyes. They speak through the properties of shape, color, space, and sometimes motion. These properties are the carriers of visual dynamics, directed forces whose configurations act as symbolical equiva-

lents of the dynamics that determine our own mental and physical existence. The expressiveness of pure form enables nonrepresentational art such as architecture and "abstract" painting or sculpture to make effective statements about human experience.

Religious Art and Reality. When put at the service of religion, art favors embodiment; that is, it favors objects of worship taking the shapes of physical existence, such as human figures, animals and trees, buildings and mountains, water and light. Not all visual images meet the conditions of art, but for reasons to be discussed later it is all but essential for religious purposes that they do so. Some of the conditions to which works of art are subject may create difficulties for their application toward religious ends. One such condition is that images, to be effective, must adhere to what may be called a unitary reality status: they must share a common universe of discourse, whether physical or metaphysical. As long as superhuman powers are represented as differing from terrestrial life only by degree, there is no problem. The Homeric gods, for example, are stronger and more beautiful than mortals and are exempt from the laws of nature, but otherwise interact with mortals at the same level. Therefore the nature and activity of these gods pose no difficulties for the painter. The same is true for biblical subjects. Regardless of how artist and viewer conceive the ontological status of God, Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel can show the creator only as a human figure, albeit one endowed with superhuman powers.

Even invisibility is no obstacle to the painter as long as it is represented as a phenomenon of the visible world; but if a supernatural power were to be shown as beyond the sphere of visibility, namely as purely spiritual, the painter could solve the task only by shifting the entire theme to the spiritual realm, the qualities of which would be represented symbolically. If, for example, the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit were depicted in the manner of the Italian futurists by stylized flames descending on a group of dark abstract shapes, this visually coherent image could work very well as a symbolical representation of an entirely spiritual event. A painter would be unable, however, to show the interaction of a spiritual, immaterial power with a material event. Marc Chagall's Bible illustrations may be cited as an example of this limitation. Meyer Schapiro observes in his *Modern Art: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New York, 1978): "Chagall feels awe before the divinity. How can he render God, who has forbidden all images? He has given the answer in [one of his illustrations] the *Creation of Man.* God's name is inscribed here in Hebrew letters in a luminous circle in the dark sky" (p. 130). Here the qualitative difference

between the immaterial and the material would seem to be indicated by the insertion of a diagrammatic sign, which can be understood intellectually but does not express visually the nature of the divine. This inherent break in aesthetic expression is circumvented in certain images created in medieval Europe and the Far East, where heaven, earth, and underworld are represented as separate entities within a continuous picture. Interaction is sacrificed, but the visual concreteness of each realm is safeguarded.

One can make a similar point by stating that visual imagery does not readily accommodate a worldview that suffers from our modern scission between what is considered accepted knowledge, especially scientific knowledge, and what is merely believed on the basis of what was held to be true in the past. In a work of art, everything is equally true, and all truth is known by one and the same means of visual evidence. The angel of the Annunciation is as real as the Virgin, and when, in a painting by Tintoretto, Christ walks on the waters of the Sea of Gennesaret, the walk is as real as the water and the boat. As far as aesthetic reality is concerned, no faith is needed where there is the certainty of sight. At the same time no picture offers scientific proof for the truth of anything it shows. A painted tree is no more real than a winged dragon. As a work of art, a painting or sculpture persuades only by the power of its visual presence. Thus it can satisfy a viewer who accepts the story as literal truth and equally one who considers it purely symbolical, but it balks at combining both views in the same image. Given its perceptual nature, visual art favors a conception of religious experience emerging from what is accepted as factually true.

Kinds of Aesthetic Truth. Works of art, then, call for the unitary reality status of everything they show and refer to. That reality status, however, is not always the same. One can distinguish the following kinds.

Iconic. What is the ontological status of an icon that is worshiped, offered gifts and sacrifices, asked for help or intercession? For believers it is clearly treated as a physically existent power residing in their world. At the same time, the admission of an image to the world of the living is rarely the result of an illusion. Typically, believers are not deceived about the reality status of the icon's body. They know that they are in the presence of an object of wood, stone, or painted canvas. A naive psychology would see here a puzzling contradiction. What counts, however, is not the biological reality of the iconic entity but the power attributed to it. As the carrier of such power, the icon is taken neither for a living creature nor for a mere representation of something active elsewhere in time and space. It is an immediately present source of active energy.

Historical. When an Egyptian sculptor made a portrait of Queen Nefertiti, or when Diego Velázquez depicted the surrender of the Dutch city of Breda to the Spanish conqueror in 1625, the artist was convinced that he was offering a likeness of someone who was actually living or had lived, or of something that actually had taken place. This conviction prevails regardless of how much or little an artist knows about the actual appearance of his or her subject. Religious images can be intended as such portraits or chronicles, that is, as representations at the same level of truthfulness as historical documentation or scientific illustration; but there is no telling by mere inspection in which cases this is in fact the artist's attitude. Certainly it would be a mistake to assume that in religious imagery the more realistic representations are necessarily the more "literally" intended ones or that, vice versa, the more stylized and abstract images are meant to be more remote from actual fact. An artist of the high Renaissance, for instance, may have depicted the repentant Mary Magdalen very realistically for the purpose of sensuous enjoyment, caring very little about the truth of the story he was telling; whereas certain more abstract styles, which to us look remote from nature, may have seemed quite lifelike to their originators and may have been inspired by a deep belief in the truthfulness of their images.

Universal. It is, however, in the nature of artistic perception that an image is seen not simply as an individual object, person, or happening, but as the representative of a whole class of things, the significance of which goes beyond that of the individual. We may know the name of a gentleman portrayed by Rembrandt, but beyond the image of the individual we see in the painting an expression of melancholy and resignation, vigilance and thought. In fact, one of the principal virtues of a great artist is the ability to handle shapes and colors in such a way that universal validity imposes itself through the individual instance. This symbolic quality of images is entirely compatible with the belief in their historical truth. When Dante Alighieri, in his letter to Can Grande della Scala, explains that a biblical story, such as that of the departure of the children of Israel, can be understood "in more senses than one," he distinguishes the literal from the allegorical meanings. The individual story may or may not be intended or understood as historical truth. When such truth is excluded, the human validity of the presentation may be nevertheless entirely preserved. We enter the aesthetic category of fiction.

Religious Subject Matter. In fiction the historical truth of the subject matter is commonly considered irrelevant, or even an obstacle to the creative freedom of the artist. Concerning religious art there is the question

of whether such an attitude toward the subject matter is acceptable. For example, can an artist who is not a believer create a convincing image? (The term "believer" may be defined for the moment in the limited sense of someone convinced of the historical truth of the depicted facts.) A telling example of an enterprise that has had considerable religious and artistic success but has also stirred up much protest is that of the Church of Nôtre-Dame-de-Toute-Grâce at Assy, France, commissioned by the Dominican fathers during the early 1940s. The story of the church, to which William S. Rubin has devoted an extensive monograph (*Modern Sacred Art and the Church of Assy*, New York, 1961), is complex. It involves the more general issue of popular aversion to modern art, but also the fact that prestigious painters and sculptors, known to be atheists, communists, or religious Jews, were called upon to design a mosaic for the facade, a tapestry for the apse, a crucifix, and other decorations. None of the artists testified to any particular difficulty with the religious subject matter, nor did they feel that the task differed in principle from the secular work to which they were accustomed. It seems safe to assume that the religious subject matter to which the artists committed themselves, the Apocalypse, the Crucifixion, the Virgin of the litany, and so forth, exerted upon them the evocative power that inheres in any great subject, whatever its origin. The impact of the universally human dimensions of the subjects upon the artists may account for the more specifically religious effectiveness of their contributions.

In a more general sense this episode raises the question of whether visual images can ever be called religious when they lack the traditional subject matter of any particular creed. One thinks immediately of representations of nature that are intended to testify to the existence and qualities of its creator. When Augustine in his *Confessions* (10.6) inquires about the nature of God, he reports:

> I asked the earth; and it answered, "I am not he"; and whatsoever are therein made the same confession. I asked the sea and the deeps, and the creeping things that lived and they replied, "We are not thy God, seek higher than we." I asked the breezy air, and the universal air with its inhabitants answered, "Anaximenes was deceived, I am not God." I asked the heavens, the sun, moon, and stars: "Neither," say they, "are we the God whom thou seekest." And I answered unto all these things which stand about the door of my flesh, "Ye have told me concerning my God, that ye are not he; tell me something about him." And with a loud voice they exclaimed, "He has made us." My questioning was my observing of them; and their beauty was their reply.

The things of nature give their answer to Augustine's question through their "beauty" (species). When we

view a painted landscape by Altdorfer or Rubens or Ses-shū, we note such qualities as power, inexhaustible abundance, variety, order, ingenuity, and mystery. The greater the artist, the more compellingly does he or she present the objects of nature as embodiments of these virtues. What the artist cannot do, however, is give them the voice by which Augustine heard them answer: "He made us." A landscape cannot do in a painting what it does in Augustine's verbal invocation; visually, cause and effect can be shown only as acting within the realm of the forces of nature themselves, as when in a romantic landscape a cataract smashes against boulders or when a blacksmith is seen striking the glowing iron. To be sure, images can be used superbly to illustrate the belief in a creator, as Augustine does with his enumeration of the things of nature, but the belief must be brought to the images as an interpretation; it is not pronounced by the images themselves.

In 1959 the Protestant theologian Paul Tillich was invited to lecture on the topic "Art and Religion" at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Significantly, he changed the title of his lecture to "Art and Ultimate Reality," arguing that the quest for ultimate reality was an indispensable aspect of religion and also the aim of all true art. He proceeded to describe five types of stylistic elements that he considered expressive of ultimate reality—a survey suggesting the generalization that any artistic attitude whatever can meet the criterion, provided the work attains the depth that goes with aesthetic excellence. In the discussion following his lecture Tillich was willing to conclude that "ultimate reality appears in what is usually called secular painting, and the difference of what is usually called religious painting is real only insofar as so-called religious painting deals with the traditional subject matters which have appeared in the different religious traditions" (*Cross Currents*, 1960).

Even when such a thesis is accepted in a general way, it seems evident that certain kinds of secular subjects are more congenial to common forms of the religious attitude than others. Thus images of nature point more readily to supernatural powers beyond the objects of physical appearance than do images of the works of man. More generic views do better as religious images than those of specific things or episodes. Stylized presentations can more readily transcend individuality on the way to ultimate reality than realistic ones, and this makes a Byzantine mosaic look more religious than a naturalistic photograph.

The extreme case is that of nonfigurative art, where abstraction reaches a maximum. The predicament of abstract art, however, has been, from the beginning, that although it may claim, as the painter Piet Mondrian did, that it represents ultimate reality more directly than other kinds of art, its relation to concrete experience becomes so tenuous that it risks proclaiming everything and nothing. For example, Fernand Léger, in 1952, decorated the side walls of the United Nations Assembly Hall in New York with large abstractions; his two gigantic tentacled clusters might well convey the sense of consolidated forces, but this very generic meaning can be channeled into a more specific application only with the help of the architectural setting and its known significance.

The limitations of nonfigurative imagery are reinforced when the absence of narrative subject matter is combined with an ascetic parsimony of form. The grids of the late work of Mondrian were threatened by a discrepancy between what was intended and what was achieved. When the form is even more severely reduced while the suggested subject becomes more specific, we have the extreme case of the fourteen *Stations of the Cross* painted around 1960 by the American artist Barnett Newman. These paintings, limited essentially to one or two vertical stripes on a plain background, tend to transcend the boundary between the pictorial and the diagrammatic—a distinction of considerable relevance for the problems of religious imagery. A diagram is a visual symbol of an idea or set of facts. It often reflects some essential property of its subject; but although it can evoke powerful emotions in the viewer—as when someone contemplates a chart depicting the increase of nuclear warheads—it does not create these experiences through its own formal expression. It merely conveys information. Something similar is true for traditional signs, such as the national flag, the cross, or the star of David. They, too, can release powerful responses, which are based on empirical association, not on the visual expression inherent in the image.

Aesthetic and Religious Experience. The distinction between mere factual information, as given for example in scientific illustrations, and aesthetic expression points at the same time to one of two fundamental similarities between aesthetic and religious experience. It is generally acknowledged that for a religious person it does not suffice to accept certain facts, such as the existence of God, but that the forces asserted to exist must be sensed as reverberating in the believer's own mind, so that when, for example, in the *Book of Job*, the Lord answers out of the whirlwind, the reader of the Bible is to be overcome by the greatness of the creation. This heightening of information into religious experience, however, is strongly aided by the poetry of the biblical language. It does not differ in principle from what distinguishes secular aesthetic experience from the mere conveyance of factual knowledge. One may learn all

there is to learn about Picasso's response to the Spanish Civil War in his painting *Guernica* and yet never experience the painting as a work of art, unless the forces of suffering, brutality, resistance, and hope come alive in the viewer's own consciousness. For this reason the purpose of religious art can be greatly enhanced when the images are of high artistic quality and thereby carry intense expression.

But is there really no difference between aesthetic and religious experience? Is it not essential for religiosity that experiencing the nature of the world into which one is born leads to a corresponding conduct of worship, of living in conformity with the demands revealed by that experience? In comparison, aesthetic contemplation may seem to be mere passive reception. Such a view of aesthetic behavior, however, is too narrow. First of all, the very fact of artistic creation is the artist's way of placing his or her most important behavior, a life's work, actively into the context of the world he or she experiences. The art historian Kurt Badt, recalling Ruskin and Nietzsche, has defined the activity of the artist as "Feiern durch Rühmung," that is, as celebration through praise (*Kunsthistorische Versuche*, Cologne, 1968). Such a definition does not turn art into religion, but it highlights the affinity of the two.

In an even broader sense, no reception of a work of art is complete unless the viewer feels impelled to live up to the intensity, purity, and wisdom of outlook reflected in it. This demand to emulate the nobility of the work of art by one's own attitude toward the world was strikingly expressed by the poet Rainer Maria Rilke when he celebrated the beautiful forms of an Archaic marble torso of Apollo. He followed his description abruptly with the admonition "Du musst dein Leben ändern" ("You must change your life").

[*See also* Architecture; Human Body, *article on* The Human Figure as a Religious Sign; Iconography; *and* Modern Art.]

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For the more general aspects of visual symbolism see, for example, Margaret Miles's "Vision: The Eye of the Body and the Eye of the Mind in St. Augustine's De Trinitate and Confessions," *Journal of Religion* 63 (April 1983): 125–142. I have also approached these issues in *Visual Thinking* (Berkeley, 1969), the chapters on "Art and Thought" and on "Models for Theory"; the essay "The Robin and the Saint," in *Toward a Psychology of Art* (Berkeley, 1966); and the chapter "Symbols through Dynamics," in *The Dynamics of Architectural Form* (Berkeley, 1977).

RUDOLF ARNHEIM

AFFLICTION. [*This entry consists of two articles. The first,* An Overview, *is a general interpretation of affliction and its religious significance; the second,* African Cults of Affliction, *focuses on the historical context in which the concept of such cults developed.*]

An Overview

Men, but more so women, have frequently viewed themselves as the victims of unsolicited and malevolent attention from the spirit world. Sometimes such affliction is thought to come out of the blue or to result from some quite trivial misdemeanor. More often it is thought to result from disputes or transgressions committed by the victim or by a relative. The outward signs of affliction are not uniform or obvious. They range from grossly stigmatizing conditions such as leprosy or madness, through trance, to a subjective malaise or a feeling that one has not received one's just deserts. The mechanics of attack vary. Some victims are able to describe the details of the method of attack with great precision. Others show no interest either in the reason for attack or in the method deployed. In the course of fieldwork in Maharashtra I was told, "We are all laymen where witchcraft is concerned." In other words, no one likes to admit to a familiarity with the techniques of witchcraft for fear of being suspected a witch oneself.

Affliction is thought to be the result of human agency in some cases, divine in others. Under the rubric of divine agency lies a whole gamut of gods and spirits who are thought to take an interest in human affairs. The divine agents who interfere and cause damage in human lives have been described as peripheral to the central religious concerns of the society in question. This nomenclature is more fully discussed by I. M. Lewis in *Ecstatic Religion* (Lewis, 1971). Children's ailments in particular tend to be attributed to possession by a deity. In Nepal, for instance, there are three deities, Hartimātā, Bhat Bhateni, and Swayambuth, whose special sphere of interest and activity is the diseases of children. In India smallpox is commonly attributed to the Hindu goddesses Śītalā and (in some regions) Chechak. In such cases it is important to identify the deity re-

sponsible for illness or misfortune in order that he or she may be appeased and further damage averted. [*See* Diseases and Cures.*] This is not the case where the afflicting agent is a spirit: in such instances victims and their families express a relative indifference concerning the exact identity of their adversary.

More often, however, affliction is thought to result from the malevolent machinations of another human being. This involves either capturing a spirit and directing it to possess the victim or else attacking the victim less circuitously by magical means. In either event the afflicted feels circumscribed by malice. Social anthropologists have often advocated a distinction between sorcery and witchcraft. The basis for the alleged distinction is that sorcery involves some physical manipulations and its efficacy depends upon learning the appropriate skills or techniques to achieve its ends, whereas witchcraft depends upon the possession of appropriate powers that transform malevolent desires into reality. (For a fuller discussion of this distinction see Middleton and Winter, 1963.) In practice this distinction appears to be more important to anthropologists than to those who bear the brunt of attack by witchcraft or sorcery. Far more important in terms of the severity of the illness, its prognosis, treatment options, and eventual outcome is the source of the affliction—in other words, whether it has been wrought by divine or human agency. It is widely held that where the afflicting power is of human origin the illness is of a more serious nature and less amenable to treatment, whereas illnesses of divine origin on the whole respond more readily to treatment. The idea that humans are less tractable and less persuadable than gods may seem strange from a Western perspective. However, whereas a dialogue can be initiated with a possessing spirit, witchcraft represents an irredeemable breakdown of human relationships: one may plead with the gods but not with an angry relative. In Maharashtra women who have lost status through, for example, divorce or barrenness interpret their plight in terms of attack by witchcraft. This observation appears to be borne out by literature from other parts of the world: where society fails to care for an individual in the sense of allocating him or her a proper place, there witchcraft is held responsible for the stigmatized circumstances of the individual.

How is spiritual affliction identified and distinguished from natural illness? In some societies certain conditions are synonymous with spiritual affliction. For example, trance is well-nigh universally held to have a spiritual etiology, madness and leprosy widely so. Other symptoms are not so easy to place. In some societies categorization is made easier by immediate recourse to a healer who makes the diagnosis on behalf of the pa-

tient. In Nepal, for instance, the bulk of the population initially consult a healer in order to determine the causation of symptoms and to ascertain whether consultation with a medical doctor would be appropriate. The healer will determine whether or not the illness is likely to respond to Western medicine and, if so, when would be an auspicious time to consult the doctor. Failure to consult at a proper time and day may jeopardize one's chances of recovery. In practice, once the healer is consulted, few patients are turned away, as the healer's province of practice is all-embracing. Where the individual alone assesses the etiology of his illness, criteria for distinguishing spiritually caused from naturally caused illness are less clear-cut. Spiritual affliction is suspected if Western medicine and treatment fail to make one better, or even make one worse. Sometimes the quality of a pain has a distinctive and unusual flavor that raises instant suspicions in the patient's mind. Respondents are hard put to describe the precise quality of this distinctiveness, however confident they themselves may be of identifying it correctly. In other cases it may be the circumstances, such as an earlier dispute or envious comments, that alert the patient to the possibility of a nonnatural causation of his illness. In Nepal, among people who make use of both traditional healers and of doctors, there is a tendency to take routine ailments such as fevers and diarrhea to the doctor and more unusual or serious complaints to healers. Quite how such treatment choices are made remains to be studied.

It is widely held, but only partially true, that the spiritually afflicted are predominantly women. Informants themselves, both women and men, readily acknowledge that women are more vulnerable to spirit possession. Most often reference is made to women's alleged lack of willpower and alleged emotional liability. Frequently, mention is made of the greater risks run by women during menstruation. At such times women are held to be more vulnerable to attack by spirits. Members of the spirit possession and healing cults of northeast Africa described by I. M. Lewis (1971) are, indeed, almost exclusively female. Lewis has been most explicit and influential in his exposition of a specific epidemiology peculiar to spirit possession. Briefly, he argues that deprived women in a harshly repressive masculine culture succumb to spirit possession, particularly if they are embroiled in some personal dispute with their husbands. However, there is danger in extrapolating from these *zār* cults of Muslim societies to healing cults in other parts of the world.

Much of the literature in this area has concerned itself with an interpretation of the healer's art and an exegesis of the symbolism of healing rituals. [*See* Heal-

ing.] For example, Larry Peters's *Ecstasy and Healing in Nepal* (1981) provides a uniquely literal interpretation of participant observation and is written from the perspective of a shaman's apprentice in the Kathmandu Valley. As such it provides an extraordinary account of shamanistic theory and practice but conveys predictably little information on the healer's clientele. Bruce Kapferer's study (1983) of demon possession in southern Sri Lanka likewise demonstrates through analysis of symbols why healing rituals may be therapeutically efficacious. A study by the Indian psychoanalyst Sudhir Kakar (1982) suggests that while most of the patients afflicted by *bhūt* (spirit) at a healing temple in Rajasthan were young women, affliction tended to shift between different family members. In other words, the original affliction may well have affected a male member of the family and may then have been transferred to a woman in the course of her caring for the patient. Similarly, studies of illness behavior in England show that women take on the burden of care and support for the sick. My study of a healing temple in Maharashtra (Skultans, 1986) finds that women attended the temple in gratitude for past cures, in lieu of another family member, or to accompany an afflicted person. Some women who were themselves afflicted came unaccompanied. All of these cases contributed toward creating a female majority. Similarly, in my earlier study of Welsh spiritualists (Skultans, 1974), I found that although the spiritually afflicted were for the most part women, the problems that beset them were common to the family. It seems, therefore, that the afflicted are giving voice to wider problems that beset the entire family.

Affliction is most often a family affair or even a community affair. Its social structure is superbly described in John M. Janzen's highly esteemed account *The Quest for Therapy in Lower Zaire* (Janzen, 1978). The family is important in managing the patient and his affliction (Janzen uses the term *therapy managing group*) and is also implicated in the causation of the affliction. The affliction is thus seen as being in large part the responsibility of family and community. While the onus for making major treatment decisions lies with the kin therapy group, so does the obligation to resolve interpersonal conflicts and rivalries within the group. It has become well-nigh a truism that illness—spiritual affliction in particular—provides an opportunity for demonstrating social solidarity through a reassertion of mutual loyalties and common values, and most studies appear to bear this theory out. The very act of reintegrating the afflicted individual into his social group serves as a reminder of the group's identity.

In the course of fieldwork for my Maharashtrian study I uncovered a complex web of family involvement. Although initially one particular family member would be singled out as in need of help, it would soon be found that the entire family was afflicted. The typical pattern of affliction developed thus: mothers, or sometimes wives, would bring their psychotic or mentally handicapped sons or husbands to the temple. A short while after arrival the patient's chief caretaker, usually the mother, would start going into a state of trance. Such trance was seen as a diagnostic tool whereby a dialogue could be initiated with the possessing spirit that would provide information concerning the nature of the illness. Trance invariably revealed that the source of the sufferer's affliction was witchcraft (*karni*) or possession by a spirit (*bhūt*). This malevolent power was directed at the whole family because of some dispute, rivalry, or envy, and the son or husband was seen as happening to be its unfortunate victim. It was thought that the original affliction might be deflected away from the first victim if the mother or some other person took over the burden of illness and that, since the family was the target of attack, any one member could substitute for another. While this belief augured well for the prognosis of individual affliction, it meant also that the individual's cure in no way signified an end to family distress. Informants cited patterns of family illness in support of this interpretation wherein affliction assumed a hydra-headed quality striking different members of the family in different ways. Sometimes one person, most often a woman, would pray that the burden of family affliction be transferred to her. If and when her prayers were thought to be answered she would begin to experience trance regularly and to decline into chronic ill health. Thus female sacrifice plays a central role in the maintenance of family health. A significant feature of this theory of affliction is the shared concern and responsibility it generates for conditions that might otherwise be perceived as extremely annoying. Typically a number of courses of action are open to the afflicted, which can be grouped under the categories of community care and specialist care.

Community Care. The afflicted person may join a community or cult of the afflicted. Here the emphasis is on learning to accommodate the affliction rather than removing it. Where the affliction involves trance, this means regularizing the times of trancing. The affliction is thus transformed from a sudden, unintelligible outburst into a routine and usually mild handicap carrying with it a number of secondary benefits. Foremost among these is the companionship of the similarly afflicted. Such communities do not usually offer specialist treatment, but they are run by veterans who have themselves experienced and learned to live with the full spectrum of affliction. Indeed, cults of affliction

share many of the features of Western forms of group therapy.

Specialist Care. From a treatment perspective, healers can be categorized according to the amount of time they are able to devote to individual cases. Some healing rituals are lengthy affairs spanning several days. Social anthropologists have demonstrated the therapeutic goal, if not the effect, of such rituals. An important ingredient of all such rituals is the symbolic representation of internal conflicts and the process of their resolution; the rituals thus come to symbolize the newly reconstituted self. They are public and involve a large audience. Such demonic healing rituals have been particularly well described by Bruce Kapferer in the study already cited.

Most often, however, the confrontation between healer and afflicted is of a more fleeting and less intense nature. Healers who have acquired a reputation for the successful management of the afflicted attract a huge clientele. The more popular a healer becomes, the less time he is able to devote to any one patient. This results in the paradoxical situation that the elaborate healing rituals described in loving detail by social anthropologists are carried out by those healers who have relatively few patients. Such time constraints on treatment are evident in Arthur Kleinman's description of the practice of a popular Taiwanese shaman (Kleinman and Sung, 1979). This shaman is described as spending an average of five minutes with each patient and only two minutes on busy nights. No doubt such restrictions on consultation time inhibit the performance of healing rituals. Thus, it seems, the price one pays for consultation with a prestigious healer is the whittling away of healing rituals. However, the abbreviation and attenuation of contact between healer and patient do not appear to diminish the popularity of the healers or, indeed, their reputation for success in curing affliction. Perhaps, therefore, the power to alleviate the affliction lies as much in the circumstances surrounding the consultation as in the actual consultation itself. Family support for the victim, as well as an explanation of the affliction that lays the burden of responsibility on the family rather than the individual, may play a part in the recovery of the patient.

Psychiatrists have suggested various explanations of trance (the most frequent manifestation of affliction), but none is entirely satisfactory. The most commonly held view, derived from Freud, is that trance is akin to hysteria, a view that unwittingly reinforces the stereotype of trance as a female affliction. Freud himself made the much-publicized claim that he had restored dignity to patients who would in an earlier age have been branded as possessed by the devil. Certainly, there are

similarities between the clinical description given of the convulsive attacks of hysterical patients and the behavior of people in certain kinds of trance. The anesthesia of hysterics and the occurrence of anesthetic and nonbleeding areas on alleged witches provide a further point of similarity. Jung views neuroses and possession states as sharing a common etiology, namely, moral conflict, which he claims derives from the impossibility of affirming the whole of one's nature. This state then gives rise either to symptoms that are in some sense foreign to the self or to possession by a foreign being. Both conditions involve an inability to express an essential part of oneself, which is thereupon suppressed and which demands alternative expression. The rudiments of this psychoanalytic approach to possession and trance have become incorporated into many later accounts. However, while having considerable explanatory power, such approaches fail to take into account the element of learning in trancing behavior. In many contexts trance is viewed in a positive, beneficial light and is consciously sought after.

Affliction has a variety of meanings. It may signal the start of a career as a religious specialist. It may usher in an entirely different lifestyle as a member of a cult of the afflicted. It may entail a round of consultations with various specialists who may or may not be able to lift the affliction. Or it may simply be a marker for one of the expected ailments of childhood or hazards of later life.

[*See also* Exorcism; Spirit Possession; *and* Witchcraft. *For related discussions, see* Medicine.]

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VIEDA SKULTANS

African Cults of Affliction

An important feature of African religions, both historically and in the twentieth century, has been the interpretation of adversity within the framework of cults, or specialized therapeutic communities. Although cults concerned with affliction and healing are widespread on the continent, the technical term *cults of affliction* has been used in recent scholarship specifically to describe the healing cults found among the Bantu-speaking peoples of central and southern Africa. The two major criteria of such cults are spirit possession and the initiation of the afflicted person into the cult. These cults have also been called "drums of affliction" because of the significance in their rituals of drums and rhythmic song dancing, both termed *ngoma* ("drum"), over a wide area. Also important in this context is the elongated *ngoma*-type single-membrane drum, which plays a central role in rituals throughout the region. The importance of the drum to these cults can be related to the fact that the drumming is considered to be the voice or influence of the ancestral shades and other spirits who possess the sufferer and also provide treatment.

Societies, History, and Therapeutics. Societies from the equator down to the Drakensberg Mountains and the Kalahari Desert in the south use many of the same terms and concepts to describe their cultural life (particularly in its religious and therapeutic aspects), including terms for sickness, health, and disease etiologies (especially prevalent is the notion that "words" or an ill will may cause sickness and misfortune). Equally common to these societies are various therapeutic techniques and materials, terms for the ancestors, and the concept of *ngoma* as it relates to song-dance communities and therapies. These shared characteristics occur in spite of much local and regional adaptation to a broad range of climates, widely divergent political and economic formations and colonial experiences during the seventeenth to twentieth centuries, as well as diverse responses to various diseases and stressful environments.

Many of the societies of the subcontinent were lineage-based agrarian communities, practicing some hunting and, in regions where the sleeping-sickness-carrying tsetse fly is absent, livestock tending. Especially in coastal regions, commercial cities have emerged, linking the continent to overseas mercantile centers. The region includes southern savanna matrilineal societies such as the Kongo, Lunda, Chokwe, Kimbundu, and Bemba of Zaire, Angola, Zambia, and Malawi; patrilineal societies such as the Luba, Lozi, Nyamwezi, and others of the central region; and in the southern region, the Shona, Sotho, and Tswana and the nearby Nguni-speaking societies of the Zulu, Swazi, and Xhosa. Numerous precolonial states and empires existed in the subcontinent, including the cluster of states of the Luba, Lunda, Kimbundu, and Chokwe; on the western coast, the Kongo, Loango, Kakongo, and Ngoyo states; the states of the eastern lakes, Kitara, Busoga, Bunyoro, Buganda, and, eastward, Nyamwezi; in the Zimbabwe region, the historic state of Monomotapa; and more recently, in the early nineteenth century, the Zulu empire and the Tswana chiefdoms, and the Sotho kingdom in the southern Africa area, associated with the great disturbances known as the Mfecane.

Cults of affliction have related dynamically to these states, either by having been brought under the tutelage of government and serving to legitimate it as a sovereign power, or by serving to preserve segments of society not directly related to the state. In the absence of the state, cults of affliction have provided a format for the perpetuation of such marginalized or afflicted social groups as women, the handicapped, and those struck with misfortune in economy-related tasks such as hunting. They are also expressly concerned with women's fertility and commerce. In some settings, the model of the cult has provided the basis for normative social authority, the definition and organization of economic activity, social organization, and more esoteric religious and artistic activities.

In colonial and postcolonial Africa, the use of affliction and adversity to organize social reproduction has contributed to the perpetuation (even the proliferation) of cults of affliction, often in a way that has baffled governmental authorities and outside observers. Cults have arisen in connection with epidemics, migration and trade routes, and shifts in modes of production. They have also emerged in response to changes in social organization and the deterioration of institutions of justice. Colonialism itself generated many of the cults of affliction appearing in the twentieth-century literature on the subject.

The cults of affliction have provided African societies with a far more pervasive concept of disease and health than that which has prevailed in the Western world. Before presenting examples of the distribution of cults of affliction in several societies, it is necessary to further describe their underlying common features.

Common Features and Variations. Beneath the diversity of cults of affliction there is a characteristic worldview regarding misfortune and how it can be classified and dealt with. Adversities that are regarded to be in the natural order of things are handled through the use of straightforward, often individual and private remedies, techniques, and interventions. Extraordinary adversities, or those that are attributed to human or spiritual forces, can only be dealt with by placating these forces or by intervening in the spiritual realm. Rather than everyday problems, cults of affliction address this second level of adversity. A hunter's chronic failure to find game, an employee's chronic loss of a job or failure to find one, accidents that occur despite taking every precaution, and misfortune juxtaposed with social conflict are all examples of extraordinary adversities.

The worldview that inspires cults of affliction includes as an axiom the idea that ancestral shades and spirits, ultimately expressions of the power of God, may influence and intervene in human affairs. The shades may either be direct, identifiable lineal ancestors or more generic "human" spirits. Other spirits of the central and southern African pantheon may include more distant nature spirits, hero spirits, or alien spirits that affect human events in varying ways. Old as well as new knowledge tends to be related to the shade and spirit forces, as events are interpreted and adversities dealt with. Thus, in the late twentieth century, as common social problems increasingly occur outside the domestic community, there has been a tendency for lineal ancestors to be supplanted by more generalized spirit forces in cults of affliction.

Therapeutic attention to affliction, through the form of cults, often entails the initiation of the afflicted individual into membership in the cult, ideally resulting in his or her elevation to the status of priest or healer in the group. Whether or not this happens (there are many "dropouts" in cults of affliction) depends on the novice's progress through early stages of therapy and counseling, on his or her economic means, and the extent to which the cult's resources are controlled by an elite (where they are controlled, access is restricted). Throughout the wider cult of affliction region, initiation is marked by two distinct stages: an initial therapeutic neutralization of the affliction, and, if the novice progresses through counseling and further therapy, a second stage, a graduation to the status of fully qualified priest, healer, or professional.

The efficacy of the therapy, regardless of its specific techniques, is partly assured because of the support given by the community of the fellow afflicted, who may or may not be the sufferer's kin. In most instances of prolonged sickness in African societies the diagnosis and decisions relating to the course of therapy—the "quest for therapy"—are in the hands of a lay managing group made up of kin. In the cases that come into the orbit of cults of affliction, the support community broadens to include the cult members. The quality of support shifts from ad hoc aid from kin to a permanent involvement with a network in the initiate-novice's life, corresponding to the long-term involvement of the individual with the affliction, or as a healer-priest over it.

Some cults of affliction, such as Nkita among the Kongo of western Zaire, are situated within lineages. Nkita responds to the unique circumstances and symptoms of lineage segmentation. Appropriately, when a generation of Nkita within a lineage fragment is afflicted, the cult provides the rationale and the setting for the regeneration of the lineage organization, and the members are reaffiliated with the ancestral source of their collective authority. Most cults of affliction, however, occur outside the kin setting. Functioning as a substitute for kin relations, they give the individual lifelong ties with others along the lines of the new affliction- or occupation-specific community. This feature has led some to hypothesize that the cults may proliferate where kin-based social units are in disarray. In the urban setting of South Africa, for example, recruitment to affliction cults is prevalent among those, especially women, who carry the burden of being single-parent household heads.

The cults of affliction are concerned with problems and responses that go well beyond trying to provide an alternative community when kin relations are in disarray. An important function of all the cults is the intellectual, analytical, and diagnostic evaluation of the nature of life and the reasons for misfortune. In this connection, distinction is often drawn between divination, the intellectual analysis of a situation, and ritual therapy, the attempt to intervene in the situation to change it. This distinction accounts for some of the diversity of affliction cult types, for where social change is intense, the need for cognitive clarity increases. Thus, in eighteenth-century coastal Kongo, during the decline of the kingdoms of the area and with the increase of trade, including the slave trade, divination cults—particularly those related to adjudication and conflict res-

olution—were extremely abundant. In southern Africa today, the term *ngoma* is often identified with divination because of the pressing need for analysis and interpretation of life in a region adversely affected by apartheid. Closer examination, however, shows that the functions of divination and network building are complementary, with both usually present in varying degrees and ways.

Divination, or diagnosis, always accompanies cults of affliction, either independently of the healing role or as a part of the specialized techniques and paraphernalia of a particular cult. Divination must be thought of as a continual querying of the whys, whos, and wherefores begun in the family setting in the face of misfortune, but carried through by specialists with expert judgment and training. These specialists may have had their own profound individual dilemmas or have been recruited to a particular mode of ritual life or been initiated and trained to deal with the spirit world. As a technique, divination may be based on a mechanistic system of signs and interpretations, such as the southern savanna *ngombo* basket, which is filled with symbolic objects signifying human life, the bone-throwing technique of southern African Nguni society, or the recital of scriptures from the Bible or the Qur'ān. Alternatively, divination involves direct recourse to possession, in which the diviner, as medium, speaks the words of the ancestral shade or spirit in answer to the query. Recent observers suggest that this form of divination is on the increase. Some diviners, however, use a combination of both techniques. In any case, these divined diagnoses, representing a type of analysis or interpretation of daily life, are the basis for the more synthetic, ritualized follow-through of the cults of affliction.

Although they vary tremendously, the rituals of initiation, healing, and celebration have common features throughout the area. Everywhere song and dance are at the heart of the participation of the initiate or celebrant. The *ngoma* ("song dance") is the product of the initiate's personal pilgrimage, and its lyrics tell of dreams and visions, as well as mundane experiences. These songs, and their rhythms, create a framework of reality within which the affliction or condition is defined and the remedy or mode of relating to it formulated. Thus, despite the collective setting, a great deal of individualized attention is available. The moving, pulsating context of ritual celebration is conducive to cognitive dissociation and restructuring, lending affliction cults a psychotherapeutic, even conversion-like quality, although they are not sectarian or exclusive in membership. The need to define and redefine experience persists throughout the career of the initiate and priest-

healer; seasoned elders continue to deal with their own dilemmas and life transitions.

Beyond these core features, the content of affliction cults varies greatly depending on the scope of issues channeled into the format. It may range, as we have seen, from treating epidemic or chronic diseases and deformities to occupational roles that require specialized knowledge or may be dangerous to the individuals yet necessary to society. In one setting the range of issues may be placed into a single ritual format; in others, issue-linked communities may grow into numerous named orders or dances. These communities may in turn be organized as a decentralized series of local cells, or overlapping networks. Alternatively, the prevailing structure may become highly hierarchical, territorially centered on a fixed shrine or central administration. Economic and political factors often play a role in shaping the structure of affliction cults. However, the taxonomy of issues addressed usually depends on the environmental conditions or on the cults' leaders, who often express their visions of solutions to human needs. The parameters of homogeneous and diversified, decentralized and centralized structures in cults of affliction may best be described by sketching several historical and contemporary settings.

Settings and Samples. The cults of affliction reveal the greatest concentration of common features in the area where linguistic homogeneity among Bantu-speaking societies is greatest—in a belt across the midcontinent that ranges from Kikongo speakers in the west to Swahili speakers in the east. A brief comparison follows of turn-of-the-century accounts of cults of affliction among the coastal Kongo, the Ndembu of Zambia, the Lunda of Zaire, and the Sukuma of the Lake Victoria region of Tanzania, all decentralized societies.

While they were associated with individual affliction in the narrow sense, cults of affliction, or orders, in these societies also related to the sacralization and organization of technical knowledge and its relationship to the legitimation and reinforcement of the social order. Divination played a role, either specific to each cult as among the Sukuma, or as a more specialized set of techniques as among the Ndembu and Kongo, both of whom practiced the *ngombo* basket technique.

Some cults related explicitly to the prevailing economic activity in each society, largely through the cultic techniques that were preferred and the types of people who became afflicted. Thus, in Ndembu and Sukuma society, hunting was the focus of several *ngoma* orders, with specific organization centered upon the mode of hunting (whether bow and arrow or gun) and the type of animal (e.g., elephant, snake, porcupine).

The Sukuma snake-handling order was, and is, a prime example of a cult devoted to the control and reproduction of technical knowledge. Known for effective snakebite treatments, the snake-dance society members possess antidotes to the numerous poisonous snake venoms of western Tanzania.

In coastal Kongo several cults dealt with trade and commerce, an appropriate focus, for these important economic activities brought divisive mercantile techniques and attitudes into lineage-based societies, as well as several contagious diseases. On the Kongo coast, where formerly centralized kingdoms had featured appeal courts, the cult of affliction format emerged in the eighteenth century as the vehicle for judicial affairs and conflict resolutions. In nineteenth-century Sukumaland, antiwitchcraft medicine cults were introduced from the Kongo Basin in response to the rising social disorder that characterized the early colonial period. The Ndembu responded to early colonialism with cults of affliction focused on new illnesses, including fevers, "wasting," and "disease of the paths," and other suspiciously colonial contagious sicknesses such as malaria, tuberculosis, and venereal diseases brought in by migrant labor. Everywhere, the cults paid much attention to twin and breach births, and other dangerous or unusual conditions of reproduction.

The label "affliction cults," understood in the narrow sense often used in the post-Enlightenment West, does not adequately fit the cults of central Africa. At the turn of the century, in the setting of early colonialism, the *ngoma* groups provided a means of buttressing and celebrating social categories of economic pursuit (land, hunting, trade), social order and justice, and the very fabric of society (marriage, authority, women's health, reproduction), as well as specified areas of sickness in the narrower sense. The celebrative, reflexive dimension of the *ngoma* needs to be emphasized, as well. In some societies, notably those of East Africa, the *ngoma* served as a means of entertainment and competition, as sport, a role that is increasingly prominent today. Indeed, in much of East Africa, the distinction is drawn between therapeutic and entertaining types of *ngoma*. Perhaps the underlying characterization of the historical *ngoma* orders would be that they ritualized key points of the social and cultural fabric that were highly charged or highly threatened. Affliction or misfortune merely served as a mode of recruitment to leadership and a means of reproducing specialized knowledge.

The picture of cults of affliction within centralized states contrasts markedly with the settings described above. In societies such as the Tswana, where historically there has been a strong chieftainship providing social continuity and material support, cults of affliction are less influential or even entirely absent. Cults are known to have provided the impetus for the emergence of centralized polities, as in the case of the Bunzi shrine of coastal Kongo. They have also emerged in the wake of historical states, picking up the aura of royal authority and the trappings of sovereignty and transforming them into the source of mystical power. A prime example of this was the Cwezi cult of the interlacustrine region of eastern central Africa, which is today a limited cult of affliction whose spirits are the royal dynasties of the ancient Cwezi kingdom of the same region.

This dynamic relationship of cults to centralized polities has been accompanied by changes in the way spirits and shades are focused in consciousness and ritual. As the scale or function of a cult expands, narrowly defined ancestor shades may give way to nature, alien, or hero spirits. In a few instances, centralized shrine cults have persisted over centuries, defining primary values and social patterns for generations of adepts. The Bunzi shrine cult of coastal Kongo, the Mbona of Malawi, and the Korekore and Chikunda in Zimbabwe are examples of well-studied cults that, though centuries old, continue into the present. Some authors have distinguished between these centralized, regional cults and the topically focused cults of affliction. But the orders, taken in their entirety, suggest more of a continuum along several axes: centralized and segmentary, inclusive and specialized, controlled by state sovereignty versus independent, or even opposed to state sovereignty. Cults have crystallized opposition to states in both precolonial and colonial settings and, to a lesser degree, in postcolonial times. Thus, the Cwezi cult channeled opposition to hierarchical structures in a number of interlacustrine states, especially Rwanda. Cult leaders organized opposition to Rhodesian labor-recruitment practices and inspired strikes in the mines in the late nineteenth century. There are other cases of tacit resistance to colonial governments inspired by cult leadership. [*See* Mbona.]

In the twentieth century, cults of affliction have tended to be short-term movements born out of desperation; trying to provide a panacea for society's ills, they are an expression of the pains experienced by a large segment of the populace because of chronic social problems. There has been a great deal of interpenetration between these cults and independent Christian churches and with Islamic orders in some areas such as East Africa. New permanent cults have arisen around such characteristic ills as the nuclear family or the maintenance of a household in an urban setting; epidemic diseases such as tuberculosis and how to cope with the chronic problems related to it; the divination of problems such as unemployment in a proletarian setting;

and how to succeed in business or retain a job. Many cults also focus on the alienation and entrapment so common in the African urban setting.

Affliction cults in central and southern Africa have thus used the classic themes of marginality, adversity, risk, and suffering in order to cope with the ever-necessary task of renewing society in the face of the profound economic and social change that has occurred since the late nineteenth century.

[*For further discussion of cults of affliction, see* Central Bantu Religions; Interlacustrine Bantu Religions; Kongo Religion; *and* Ndembu Religion.]

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The most important scholarship on the subject of cults of affliction in central and southern Africa remains the work of Victor Turner, which although limited to one small society, the Ndembu, is the first work to identify the subject accurately. Two books offer good coverage: *The Drums of Affliction: A Study of Religious Processes among the Ndembu of Zambia* (Oxford, 1968) and *Revelation and Divination in Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1975). Several earlier works may be noted that study aspects of the *ngoma* complex or provide detailed case material: John Beattie and John Middleton, eds., *Spirit Mediumship and Society in Africa* (London, 1969); J. Clyde Mitchell, *The Kalela Dance: Aspects of Social Relationships among Urban Africans in Northern Rhodesia* (Manchester, 1956); Hans Koritschoner, "Ngoma ya Sheitani," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 46 (1936): 209–219; and Hans Cory, "The Buswezi," *American Anthropologist* 57 (1955), 923–952. (Cory's work on the Sukuma has not yet been published; it is accessible in the archives of the African Studies Center at the University of Dar-es-Salaam.)

More recently, the most important work on cults of affliction has been ethnographical and historical, either adding to case material and/or analyzing it in terms of economic, social, and political changes. Examples of this kind of work include T. O. Ranger's *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa, 1890–1970: The Beni Ngoma* (London, 1975); John M. Janzen's *Lemba, 1650–1930: A Drum of Affliction in Africa and the New World* (New York, 1981); and the numerous case studies published in two special issues of the journal *Social Science and Medicine.* The earlier issue (vol. 13B, no. 4, 1979), devoted to "The Social History of Disease and Medicine in Africa" and edited by John M. Janzen and Steven Feierman, includes cases by Gwyn Prins on the Nzila cult of Zambia, by John M. Janzen on Lemba of coastal Kongo, and by Ellen Corin on Zebola of urban Kinshasa; the later issue (vol. 15B, no. 3, 1981), devoted to "Causality and Classification in African Medicine and Health" and edited by John M. Janzen and Gwyn Prins, includes a case study on *sangoma* networks of southern Africa by Harriet Ngubane. *Regional Cults*, an important volume edited by R. P. Werbner (New York, 1977), brings together several studies on centralized "regional" cults in southern and eastern Africa, including work on Mbona in Malawi by J. Matthew Schoffeleers, on southern Africa's high-god cult by Werbner, on regional and nonregional cults of affliction in Zambia by Wim van Binsbergen, on prophets and local shrines in Zambia by Elizabeth Colson, and on disparate regional cults in Zimbabwe by Kingsley Garbet, as well as a theoretical introduction to the subject of regional cults.

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JOHN M. JANZEN

AFGHĀNĪ, JAMĀL AL-DĪN AL- (1838/9–1897),
Muslim thinker and politician. Born near Hamadhan in Iran, al-Afghānī was Iranian, in spite of his later claim to be Afghan. His own version of his early life was not always accurate, but it seems clear that he had a traditional education in Iran and then in the Shī'ī holy city of Najaf, Iraq. He spent some early years in India, where he first learned of modern Western ideas and observed British rule over a partly Muslim population. From then onward his life was one of movement and shifting fortunes: in Afghanistan, Istanbul, and Cairo, then India again, then Paris and London, then Iran, Russia, and Iran once more, and finally in Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman empire. Through all the changes there is a recurrent pattern: everywhere he gathered around him groups of disciples; everywhere he tried to warn Muslims of the dangers of European, and particularly British, expansion; and, although he won favor with Muslim rulers, he ended by attacking them for being weak or corrupt and was several times expelled by them.

His writings are few: *Al-radd 'alā al-dahrīyīn* (The Refutation of the Materialists), an attack upon certain Indian Muslims who were willing to accept British rule,

and a periodical, *Al-'urwah al-wuthqā* (The Indissoluble Link), written with the Egyptian theologian Muḥammad 'Abduh and addressed to the whole Muslim world. It is not always easy to discover what al-Afghānī really believed, for he wrote in different ways for different audiences. His main theme is clear, however: Muslims cannot acquire the strength to resist European expansion unless they understand their own religion rightly and obey it.

His understanding of Islam seems to have been that of such Islamic philosophers as Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), reinforced by what he learned from modern Western thinkers. Human reason properly enlightened can teach people that there is a transcendent God and that they are responsible for acting in accordance with his will. Ordinary people cannot attain to such knowledge or restrain their passions, and for them prophets have embodied the truth in symbolic forms (it is not clear whether al-Afghānī believed that prophets were inspired by God or were simply practicing a human craft). The Qur'ān is one such symbolic embodiment of the truth. Properly interpreted, its message is the same as that of reason; thus, as human knowledge advances, the Qur'ān needs to be interpreted anew.

The Qur'ān, rightly understood, teaches that Muslims should act virtuously and in a spirit of solidarity. If they do this, they will have the strength to survive in the modern world. Al-Afghānī's main endeavors were to stir Muslims to such activity and solidarity, yet his hopes of finding a Muslim ruler who would accept his advice were always disappointed. In later life he appealed more to the rising pan-Islamic sentiment of the time, and his writing and activities took on a more orthodox Islamic coloring.

Al-Afghānī's personality seems to have been powerful and attractive, and wherever he went he found followers. At times he had considerable influence, although less than he claimed. In his last years in Istanbul his fame declined, but it returned after his death, and he came to be regarded as the precursor of a wide variety of Islamic movements.

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ALBERT HOURANI

AFRICAN RELIGIONS. [*This entry comprises four articles that introduce the scope and study of the indigenous religions of sub-Saharan Africa:*

> An Overview
> Mythic Themes
> Modern Movements
> History of Study

Further discussion of traditional African religions can be found in West African Religions; East African Religions; Southern African Religions; *and other entries on the religions of particular peoples. For discussion of traditional religion in North Africa, see* Berber Religion. *The religions of ancient Africa are discussed in* Egyptian Religion; Aksumite Religion; *and* Kushite Religion.]

An Overview

Prior to the coming of Christianity and Islam to Africa, the peoples south of the Sahara developed their own religious systems, and these formed the basis of much of their social and cultural life. Today, the indigenous religions, modified by colonial and postcolonial experience, continue to exist alongside Christianity and Islam and to play an important role in daily existence.

African traditional religions are closely tied to ethnic groups. Hence it may be said that there are as many different "religions" as there are ethnic language groups, which number over seven hundred south of the Sahara. There are, however, many similarities among the religious ideas and practices of major cultural and linguistic areas (e.g., Guinea Coast, central Bantu, Nilotes), and certain fundamental features are common to almost all African religions. Although these features are not unique to Africa, taken together they constitute a distinctively African pattern of religious thought and action.

Historical Background. Except for the most recent colonial and precolonial past, there is little evidence concerning the early history of African religions, especially from the remote Paleolithic period. Because of the conditions of climate and habitation, archaeological remains, such as pottery, stone implements, bronze and stone figures, earthworks, and rock paintings, have been discovered at only a few places in eastern, western, and southern Africa, and the cultural contexts of these finds are largely unknown. It was once supposed that the var-

ious contemporary hunting-gathering, agricultural, and pastoral societies in Africa developed from a few basic cultural systems, or civilizations, each with its own set of linguistic, racial, religious, economic, and material cultural characteristics. Thus the early cultural and religious history of African societies was seen in terms of the interaction and intermixture of these hypothetical cultural systems, producing the more complex cultural and religious patterns of today. But it is now recognized that elements of language, race, religion, economics, and material culture are not so closely related as was assumed and that the early cultural systems were too speculatively defined. Hence historical reconstruction on these grounds has been abandoned.

Nevertheless, recent research has been able to bring to light important evidence concerning the early phases of religion in certain areas. The rock paintings of southern Africa, which date mostly from the nineteenth century but also from 2000 and 6000 and 26,000 BP, appear to represent a continuous tradition of shamanism practiced by the San hunters and their ancestors. Nineteenth-century and contemporary San ethnography suggest that shamanistic trance states, induced by dancing, are the subject matter of much southern African rock art. In trance states, San men experience the presence of a sacred power in their bodies, a power that also exists in certain animals, especially the eland, a large antelope. When this power enters the dancing men, they fall into a state of deep trance, or "half-death," as the !Kung San call it. Trance enables the men to perform three kinds of acts: the luring of large game animals to the hunters, the curing of illness, and the causing of rain by killing of special "rain animals." The rock art painted by the San and their ancestors shows men performing each of these tasks. The visual signs of trance that appear in the art are bleeding from the nose, perspiration, dancing, lines piercing (or extending from) the head, the wearing of caps with antelope ears, and the partial transformation of men into animals, especially antelopes. While manifesting these signs of trance, men are shown bending over people and drawing out illness, shooting rain animals, and luring game by ritual means. There is no indication that the art itself was regarded as magical; instead, the paintings depict the ritual acts and visionary experiences by which the shamans governed the relationships between human beings, animals, and the spirits of the dead. These relationships lay at the core of San society, and the rock paintings may well record practices that date from the earliest times in southern Africa. [See Khoi and San Religion.]

When agriculture began to spread south of the Sahara around 1500 BCE, an important religious development accompanied the gradual change from hunting-gathering to agricultural economies. This was the emergence of territorial cults, organized around local shrines and priests related to the land, crop production, and rain. These autochthonous cults provided political and religious leadership at the local level and also at the clan and tribal level. In central Africa the oral tradition and known history of some territorial cults date back five or six centuries and have been the key to historical reconstruction of religion in this area.

When ironworking penetrated sub-Saharan Africa in 400–500 CE, it gave rise to a number of myths, rites, and symbolic forms. Ironworking was said to have been brought by a mythic culture hero, blacksmiths were regarded as a special caste subject to ritual prohibitions, and the blacksmith's forge was sometimes regarded as a sanctuary. Iron itself was thought to have sacred properties. Throughout West Africa ironmaking, hunting, and sometimes warfare formed a sacred complex of rites and symbols under the tutelage of a culture hero or deity.

In northern Nigeria over 150 terra-cotta figures have been found dating from at least 500 BCE to 200 CE, the earliest known terra-cotta sculpture in sub-Saharan Africa. This sculpture, known as Nok sculpture after the site at which it was first found, consists of both human and animal figures. Although it is likely that these pieces had religious significance, either as grave goods or as ritual objects (or both), their meaning at present is entirely unknown.

The famous bronze heads of Ifẹ, Nigeria, date from the twelfth to fifteenth centuries and may be distantly related to Nok sculpture. The sixteen naturalistic Ifẹ heads were found in the ground near the royal palace at Ifẹ. The heads have holes to which beards and crowns were attached. Each head may have represented one of the founders of the sixteen city-states that owed allegiance to Ifẹ, and each may have carried one of the sixteen crowns. Among the Yoruba, the "head" (ori) is the bearer of a person's destiny, and the "head" or destiny of a king was to wear the crown. The crown was the symbol of the sacred aṣe, or power, of the king that the crown or the head itself may have contained. Bronze heads were also made in the kingdom of Benin, an offshoot of Ifẹ located to the southeast, where they served as shrines for deceased Bini kings.

In southern Africa the wall ruins of Great Zimbabwe in present-day Zimbabwe belong to a cultural complex that evolved in the early twelfth century. Great Zimbabwe was the political capital of the Shona kings for two hundred years, until 1450. The ancestors of the kingship seem to have been represented by large, eagle-like sculptures with human characteristics, and these

are thought to have been the focus of the royal ancestor cult.

Wherever kingship arose in Africa during the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, it became a dominant part of the religious system. The rulers, whether sacred or secular, generally attained total or partial control of the preexisting territorial cults above the local level. Oral tradition usually records the encounter between the conquering kings and the autochthonous cults, which sometimes put up resistance. This encounter was often memorialized in the form of annual rites that recalled the initial conquest and subsequent accommodation between the king and the autochthonous cults whose powers over the land were necessary for the welfare of the state. For example, at Ifẹ there is an annual ceremonial enactment of the defeat and return of the indigenous creator god Ọbatala (also known as Oriṣa-nla), and the restoration of his cult in the city. In other cases, the local cults were taken over and grafted onto the royal cult. Thus the Lundu kings took over the preroyal cults of the supreme being in Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique and incorporated their priests and prophets into the royal sphere.

Most kings were regarded as gods or as the descendants of gods and were spiritually related to the fertility of the land and to the welfare of the people. Even in Buganda in central Uganda, where they did not have such mystical powers, the kings were regarded as sacred personages. It is now recognized that the institution of sacred kingship, which was once thought to be derived from ancient Egypt because of some general similarities with sub-Saharan kingships, was independently invented in various places in the African continent, not only in Egypt. [See Kingship, article on Kingship in Sub-Saharan Africa.]

From the seventeenth to early nineteenth centuries, there is evidence of two types of development: an increase in spirit possession and healing cults, generally known as cults of affliction, and an emphasis upon the concept of the supreme being. The emergence of popular healing cults seems to have been linked to a breakdown in local political institutions and to contact with outside forces and new diseases. The well-documented Lemba cult in western Zaire, which dates from the seventeenth century to the early twentieth century, was but one of many *ngoma* ("drum") therapies that were, and still are, characteristic of the religions of the Bantu-speaking peoples of central and southern Africa. During the same period, the growing importance of the concept of supreme being appears to have been linked to the enlargement of political scale and to the need to explain widespread social and political changes at the most universal level.

General Characteristics. Common to most African religions is the notion of the imperfect nature of the human condition. Almost every society has a creation myth that tells about the origins of human life and death. According to this myth, the first human beings were immortal; there was no suffering, sickness, or death. This situation came to an end because of an accident or act of disobedience. Whatever the cause, the myth explains why sickness, toil, suffering, and death are fundamental to human existence.

The counterpart to this idea is the notion that the problems of human life may be alleviated through ritual action. African religions are systems of explanation and control of immediate experience. They do not promise personal salvation in the afterlife or the salvation of the world at some future time. The promise of African religions is the renewal of human affairs here and now, a this-worldly form of salvation. Through ritual action misfortunes may be overcome, sicknesses removed, and death put off. In general, bad situations may be changed into good ones, at least temporarily. The assumption is that human beings are largely responsible for their own misfortunes and that they also possess the ritual means to overcome them. The sources of suffering lie in people's misdeeds, or sins, which offend the gods and ancestors, and in the social tensions and conflicts that can cause illness. The remedy involves the consultation of a priest or priestess who discovers the sin or the social problem and prescribes the solution, for example, an offering to appease an offended deity or a ritual to settle social tensions. Belief in the perfectibility of human beings is not a part of African traditional religions. Instead, such religions provide the means for correcting certain social and spiritual relationships that are understood to be the causes of misfortune and suffering, even death. They assume that the traditional moral and social values, which the gods and ancestors uphold, are the guidelines for the good life and emphasize these rules and values in ritual performances in order to renew people's commitment to them.

At the theological level, African religions contain both monotheistic and polytheistic principles. The concept of a supreme god is widely known in tropical Africa and existed before the coming of Christianity and Islam. The idea of a supreme god expresses the element of ultimacy, fate, and destiny, which is part of most African religions. As the ultimate principle behind things, the supreme god usually has no cult, images, temples, or priesthood. These are unnecessary because he stands above reciprocal relationships with human beings, on which the lesser gods depend.

In contrast to the invisibility and remoteness of the

supreme god, the lesser gods and the ancestor spirits, which often serve as the supreme being's intermediaries, are constantly involved in daily affairs. Their many shrines, images, and priesthoods make them highly visible and important features of traditional life. They are sources of both protection and harm, depending upon how faithfully they are served. People regularly attend their shrines to pray, receive advice, and make offerings, usually in the form of animal sacrifice. Thus African religions are both polytheistic and monotheistic, depending upon the context. In matters concerning the ultimate destiny and fate of individuals and groups, the supreme god may be directly involved. In matters concerning everyday affairs, the lesser gods and ancestors are more immediately involved.

From the point of view of African religions, a human being consists of social, moral, spiritual, and physical components united together; the individual is viewed as a composite totality. That is why social conflicts can make people physically ill and why moral misdeeds can cause spiritual misfortunes. Rituals that are aimed at restoring social and spiritual relationships are therefore deemed to affect people's physical health and well-being. A person's life is also seen to pass through several stages. One of the important tasks of traditional religion is to move people successfully through the major stages of life: birth, puberty, marriage, elderhood, death, ancestorhood. Each phase has its duties, and rites of passage make sure that people know their responsibilities. In this way people's lives are given shape and pattern. Important traditional offices, such as kingship, chieftaincy, and priesthood, are also maintained by rites of passage. Other rituals divide the year into seasons and give the annual cycle its form and rhythm.

Ritual authorities, such as diviners, prophets, priests, and sacred kings, serve a common religious purpose: the communication between the human world and the sacred world. Shrines and temples facilitate this process by linking together the two worlds around an altar. The priest's job is to perform prayers and sacrifices that carry people's desires to the spiritual world; the priest, in turn, communicates the will of the spiritual beings to the people.

Mythology: Creation, Heroes, and Tricksters. African myths deal primarily with the origin of mankind and with the origin of social and ritual institutions. They explain both the structure of the world and the social and moral conditions of human life. Most creation myths posit an original state of cosmic order and unity, and they tell of a separation or division that arose between divinity and humanity, sky and earth, order and disorder, which resulted in human mortality. These myths explain why human beings are mortal by

telling how they became mortal. Thus they presuppose that humanity was originally immortal and passed into a state of mortality. The myths usually say that mortality was the result of a deliberate or accidental misdeed committed by a human being, often a woman, or an animal. Although questions of human responsibility are sometimes involved, the underlying meaning is generally that death was a necessary, indeed, a natural, outcome; otherwise, human beings would not be truly human and humanity and divinity would not be properly separated.

Some myths explain the origins and significance of death by showing that it is essentially linked to the agents of human fertility and reproduction: women, food, sexuality, and marriage. The Dinka of the southern Sudan say that the first woman disobeyed the creator god who told her to plant or pound only one grain of millet a day, lest she strike the low-hanging sky with her hoe or tall pestle. When she lifted her pole to cultivate (or pound) more millet, she struck the sky, causing the sky and God to withdraw. Thenceforth, human beings suffered sickness and death and had to toil for their food. In this myth it is a woman's desire for plenty (life), which the Dinka view indulgently, that overcame the original restrictive proximity between humanity and God. The Nuer, who live near the Dinka, say that in the beginning a young girl descended from the sky with her companions to get food and that she fell in love with a young man whom she met on earth. When she told her companions that she wished to stay on earth, they ascended to the sky and spitefully cut the rope leading to the ground, thus severing the means for immortality. The myth reflects the choice that every Nuer woman must make in marriage when she leaves her childhood home and friends and goes to live with her husband. According to the Ganda of central Uganda, the first woman disobeyed her father, the sky god, which caused her brother, Death, to come into the world and kill some of her children. In Buganda a girl's brother is the traditional agent of marriage and has a temporary claim to one of his sister's children. The myth implies that death is viewed as a necessary counterpart to life, as the mother's brother is a necessary counterpart to marriage and a claimant to one of his sister's children. [*See* Nuer and Dinka Religion.]

Another widely known myth among Bantu-speaking peoples explains the origin of death in terms of a message that failed. In the beginning the creator god gave the message of life to a slow-moving animal (e.g., chameleon, sheep). Later, he grew impatient and gave the message of death to a faster animal (e.g., lizard, goat). The faster animal arrived first and delivered his message, and death became the lot of mankind. In this

myth the natural slowness and quickness of the two animals determine the outcome, making death a natural and inevitable result. Other myths emphasize the similarity between death and sleep and the inability of human beings to avoid either. According to this myth, the creator god told the people to stay awake until he returned. When he came back they had fallen asleep and failed to hear his message of immortality. When they woke up he gave them the message of death.

Hero myths tell how important cultural discoveries, such as agriculture and ironmaking, originated and how major social and ritual institutions, such as marriage, village organization, kingship, priesthood, and cult groups, came into existence. Often the founding deeds of the hero are reenacted in ritual with creative and transforming effect. The hero may continue to live among the people in spiritual form through a priest or prophet and become manifest on important ritual occasions. Many African deities are said to have been heroes who died and returned in spiritual form to serve as guardians and protectors of the people. In Africa myth and history often overlap, and together they form a unified explanation of the world since the time of the beginning.

Another type of myth is the trickster story. Trickster stories range from fablelike satirical tales to accounts of world creation. The trickster may exist only as a character in stories or as an active deity. Whatever his particular form, the trickster image expresses the fundamental ambiguities of human life. He is both fooler and fooled, wily and stupid, maker and unmade. A seemingly misguided culture hero, the trickster introduces both order and disorder, confusion and wisdom into the world. His comic adventures convey a widely recognized African principle: life achieves its wholeness through the balance of opposites. The trickster's acts of disorder prepare the way for new order; death gives way to birth. According to the Dogon of central Mali, the trickster god Ogo destroyed the original perfection of the creator god's plan and could only partly restore it. Yet the trickster also helps human beings to discover the hidden dangers of life through divination. Among the Yoruba of western Nigeria, the god Eṣu is both the agent of social conflict and the peacemaker of the marketplace, as well as the confuser of humans and the messenger of the gods. His two-sided nature brings together the gods and human beings in a cooperative manner through divination and sacrifice, which he supervises. The Akan-Ashanti tales about Ananse the Spider in southern Ghana and the tales about the Hare in eastern and southern Africa express profound and ironic insights into the foibles and possibilities of human nature. In general, African trickster mythology expresses

optimism about the paradoxes and anomalies of life, showing that cleverness and humor may prevail in a fundamentally imperfect world. [See Tricksters, *article on* African Tricksters.]

Monotheism and Polytheism. African religions combine principles of unity and multiplicity, transcendence and immanence, into a single system; thus they generally contain both monotheistic and polytheistic aspects. Often there is also the concept of an impersonal power, such as the Yoruba concept of *aṣe*, by which all things have their being. In different contexts each of these principles may come to the fore as the primary focus of religious thought and action, although each is part of the larger whole.

As ultimate principles, many supreme gods are like African sacred kings: they reign but do not rule. They occupy the structural center of the system but are rarely seen or heard, and when they are it is only indirectly. For this reason the supreme gods belong more to the dimension of myth than to that of ritual. However, the world would cease to exist without them, as would a kingdom without the king. Thus, in many instances the supreme god is the one, omniscient, omnipotent, transcendent, creator, father, and judge. From the time of the first contact with Muslims and Christians, Africans recognized their supreme gods to be the same as the God of Christianity and Islam. It is not known whether African religions were more or less monotheistic than they are today, although it is certain that African concepts of God have changed over time.

Divinity and Experience. Unlike the supreme beings, which remain in the background of religious life, the lesser divinities and spirits are bound up with everyday experience. These powers are immanent, and their relation to human beings is reciprocal and interdependent. Hence they require many shrines, temples, priests, cult groups, images, rituals, and offerings to facilitate their constant interactions with people.

The gods and spirits are known through personal encounter as living agents who directly affect people's lives. Often associated with elements of nature, such as lightning, rain, rivers, wild animals, and forests, they may be understood as images or symbols of collective psychological and social realities that resemble these natural phenomena in their powerful, dangerous, and beneficial aspects. The most common form of encounter between the human and the divine is spirit possession, the temporary presence of a deity or spirit in the consciousness of a person. Spirit possession may occur in a formal ritual context or in the normal course of everyday life. In Africa, as elsewhere, possession behavior is culturally stylized and highly symbolic. It is neither extremely pathological nor physiologically uncontrolla-

ble. It is an integral part of religion and has a well-defined role within it. In some societies possession is regarded as an affliction, and the aim is to expel the intruding god or spirit so that the suffering person may resume a normal life. Once the god or spirit has made the reasons for its appearance known through the voice of the afflicted person or through divination, offerings are made and the spirit departs. Usually the cause is some misdeed or sin that must be redressed through ritual action. In other societies possession is a more desirable phenomenon. People may regularly seek to come closer to their gods, even to identify personally with them, through possession-inducing dances that have beneficial psychological and social effects.

Mediums, Diviners, and Prophets. Sometimes a divinity may wish to form a special relationship with an individual. The god usually makes his desire known through an illness. Indeed, sickness is sometimes seen as a sacred calling that is manifested in the form of a possession. The cure will take the form of apprenticeship and initiation into the service of the deity, and it will place the person in lasting debt to society. Henceforth, the chosen man or woman becomes professionally established at a shrine and becomes the god's medium, devoted to the healing of afflicted people. He or she treats illnesses and social problems through mediumship séances. Treatment begins with a payment of money and with the questioning of the client by the spirit speaking through the medium. The interrogation is skillful and focuses upon the client's social situation. The remedy usually involves moral advice, herbal prescriptions, ritual actions, and sometimes membership in a special cult group, as among the central Bantu-speaking peoples. The client himself may already have thought of the diagnosis and of the remedies that the medium proposes, or the séance may reveal new insights and procedures. In either case, the client departs from the consultation knowing that his problem has been expertly investigated and that he has received authoritative advice. [See Central Bantu Religions.]

In Africa the distinction between mediums, diviners, priests, and prophets is a fluid one, and transition from one to the other is made easily. Generally, diviners and mediums are spiritual consultants, whereas prophets are leaders of men. Prophets may go directly to the people with programs for action and initiate religious and political movements. For this reason prophets are often sources of religious and political change. In circumstances of widespread political unrest, priestly mediums may develop prophetic powers and initiate socioreligious change. This occurred during colonial times in East Africa: traditional prophets became leaders of political resistance in parts of Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania,

and Zimbabwe. In Kenya, the Mau Mau resistance movement was also significantly implemented and sustained by traditional ritual procedures.

A more indirect form of spiritual communication involves the use of divination equipment, such as cowrie shells, leather tablets, animal entrails, palm nuts, a winnowing basket, small animal bones, and animal tracks. After careful interrogation of the client, the diviner manipulates and interprets his material in order to reach a diagnosis. Such systems work according to a basic typology of human problems, aspirations, and causal factors. The diviner applies this framework to his client's case by manipulating his divination apparatus.

The most complex system of divination in Africa is Ifa. It is practiced by the Yoruba of southern Nigeria and in various forms by the Igbo, Igala, and Nupe of Nigeria, the Ewe of Togo, and the Fon of Benin. It consists of a large number of poems that are related to a set of 256 divination patterns. When one of the patterns is cast, the diviner recites the appropriate poems. The poems tell of real-life problems experienced by the gods and ancestors in the past. Without telling the diviner his problem, the client chooses the poem that best fits his situation. He then asks more questions of the diviner, who makes additional casts of his divination chain, until the client discovers all the potential dangers and benefits his destiny holds for him, together with the ritual means of ensuring the best possible outcome. Like all systems of divination, Ifa's predictions are general and open to interpretation. The value of divination lies not in the precision of prediction but in the decision-making processes that it offers to the client. Divination procedures require the client (and often his or her family) to examine problems fully, to consider alternative courses of action, and to obtain professional guidance. The result is a course of action that is objectively based, divinely sanctioned, and socially acceptable.

Diviners and mediums employ methods of treatment that usually involve a mixture of psychological, social, medical, and ritual means. Many illnesses are regarded as uniquely African in nature and hence as untreatable by Western methods. They include cases of infertility, stomach disorders, and a variety of ailments indicative of psychological stress and anxiety. The causes of such illnesses are generally attributed to social, spiritual, or physiological factors, either separately or in some combination. Typically, a person's problems will be attributed to his misdeeds or to the ill will of other people because of the belief in the social source of illness and misfortune. Equally fundamental is the notion that religion concerns the total person, his physical as well as his spiritual well-being.

To the extent that European Christianity relates only

to spiritual matters, African societies have fashioned their own forms of Christianity whose rituals are aimed at both the physical and spiritual ills of society. These tend to be prophet-led, independent churches that utilize the power of Christian prayer and ritual to heal physiological and psychological maladies, much like the indigenous religions. Islam has been adapted along similar lines. Although Western medicine is recognized and sought after for the treatment of infectious diseases and physical injuries, ritual techniques continue to be used in both rural and urban areas because of African ideas about the social and spiritual foundation of personal health and well-being. Where the two systems are available, people often utilize both. Increased urbanization has tended to break down certain elements of traditional religions, for example, rites for ancestor spirits and nature gods, but urbanization has created its own social, psychological, and spiritual problems for which diviners and mediums have developed methods of treatment. [*See also* Affliction, *article on* African Cults of Affliction.]

Ritual: Sacrifice and Rites of Passage. Ritual is the foundation of African religions. To become possessed by the gods, to speak ritual words, to perform offerings and sacrifices, or to make children into adults is to shape experience according to normative patterns of meaning and thereby to control and renew the world. The ritual sphere is the sphere in which the everyday world and the spiritual world communicate with each other and blend into one reality. Almost every African ritual is therefore an occasion in which human experience is morally and spiritually transformed. The two most important forms of African ritual are animal sacrifice and rites of passage. Both follow common patterns.

The sacrifice of animals and the offering of vegetable foods accomplish a two-way transaction between the realm of divinity and the realm of humanity. The vegetable offerings and animal victims are the mediating principles. They are given to the gods and spirits in return for their favors. Animal sacrifice is especially prominent because the life of the victim and its blood are potent spiritual forces. By killing the victim, its life is released and offered to the gods for their sustenance in exchange for their blessings, especially in the case of human life that is threatened. The act of sacrifice may also transfer the illness to the animal victim, which thus serves as a scapegoat. An animal may also be sacrificed so that its blood may act as a barrier against malevolent spiritual forces. Fowl, sheep, and goats are the most common sacrificial animals; cattle are frequently sacrificed among pastoralist peoples. Animal victims usually possess certain characteristics of color, size, shape, and behavior that make them symbolically

appropriate for certain spiritual beings. Through invocations, prayers, and songs, human desires are made known, sins are confessed, and spiritual powers attracted to the sacrificial scene. Generally, the ritual word performs a dual function: it says what is desired and helps to bring about the desired through the power of ritual speech. [*See* Drama, *article on* African Religious Drama, *and* Music, *article on* Music and Religion in Sub-Saharan Africa.]

Sacrifices are performed on a variety of occasions in seasonal, curative, life-crisis, divinatory, and other kinds of rituals, and always as isolable ritual sequences. Sacrifices that involve the sharing of the victim's flesh confirm the bond between the people and the spiritual power, to which a portion is given. Purifications may also be performed so that the participants may be cleansed of the potent sacred elements of the sacrifice. Major sacrificial rites usually have the following structure: consecration, invocation, immolation, communion, and purification. At the social level, sacrifices and offerings bring together individuals and groups and reinforce common moral bonds. Fundamentally, blood sacrifice is a reciprocal act, bringing gods and people together in a circuit of moral, spiritual, and social unity. In this way sacrifice restores moral and spiritual balance—the healthy equilibrium between person and person, group and group, human beings and spiritual powers—which permits the positive flow of life on earth. As a sacred gift of life to the gods, sacrifice atones for human misdeeds and overcomes the human impediments to the flow of life; thus it is one of the keystones of African religions.

Rites of passage possess a threefold pattern consisting of rites of separation, transition, and reincorporation. Their purpose is to create and maintain fixed and meaningful transformations in the life cycle (birth, naming, puberty, marriage, death, ancestorhood), in the ecological and temporal cycle (planting, harvest, seasonal change, lunar and solar cycles, new year), and in the accession of persons to high office. Without these rites there would be no significant pattern to traditional life and no enduring social institutions.

The important phase in these ceremonies is the middle, or liminal, period of transition. In this phase people are morally remade into "new" social beings. Newborn infants are made into human persons, children are made into adults, men and women are made into husbands and wives, adults are made into elders, princes are made into kings, deceased persons are made into ancestor spirits. Seasonal transitions are also marked and celebrated in this way. Thus the old year is made into the new and the season of drought is made into the season of rain.

This remaking of persons and time involves the symbolic destruction of the old and the creation of the new. It is a dual process of death and rebirth, involving symbols of reversal, bisexuality, disguise, nakedness, death, humility, dirt, intoxication, pain, and infantilism. These symbols of ritual liminality have both negative and positive connotations representing the paradoxical situation of the womb/tomb—the betwixt and between period when people are neither what they were nor what they will become. In the liminal stage, people are momentary anomalies, stripped of their former selves, ready to become something new. Similarly, the time between the seasons and the time between the years belongs neither to the old nor to the new but to both. The transition phase is a time out of time, when the usual order of things is reversed or suspended, ready to become reestablished and renewed. During the Apo New Year ceremony of the Ashanti, people openly express their resentments against their neighbors, chiefs, and king in order to "cool" themselves and rid society of its tensions, which may cause harm before order is restored and the new year begins.

The most fundamental rite of passage is that which initiates the young into adulthood. In this way a society not only moves its young into new social roles but also transforms them inwardly by molding their moral and mental disposition toward the world. A period of instruction may or may not be part of this process. A Nuer boy simply tells his father that he is ready to receive the marks of *gar*, six horizontal lines cut across the forehead. His socialization is already assumed. In many West African societies the rite is held in the confines of initiation groves where the initiates are given intensified moral and religious instruction. These rites may take place over a period of years and are organized into men's and women's initiation societies, such as the Poro society among the Senufo of the Ivory Coast, Mali, and Burkina Faso. By means of stories, proverbs, songs, dances, games, masks, and sacred objects, the children and youths are taught the mysteries of life and the values of the adult world. The rites define the position of the initiates in relation to God, to society, to themselves, and to the world. Some form of bodily marking is usually done, and circumcision and clitoridectomy are widely practiced. The significance of bodily marking varies. Among the Gbaya of Mali, the initiates are cut slightly on the stomach with a "mortal wound" to signify their "death" to childhood. Generally, the marks indicate that the transition to adulthood is permanent, personal, and often painful and that society has successfully imprinted itself upon the individual.

Persons, Ancestors, and Ethics. African concepts of the person, or self, share several characteristics. Generally, the self is regarded as composite and dynamic; it consists of several aspects, social, spiritual, and physical, and admits of degrees of vitality. The self is also open to possession by divinity, and its life history may be predestined before birth. After death, the self becomes a ghost, and in the course of several generations it becomes merged with the impersonal ancestors. Each of these aspects and potentialities of the person, sometimes misleadingly described as multiple souls, is important in different contexts and receives special ritual attention.

In West African societies, the success or failure of a person's life is explained by reference to a personal destiny that is given to the individual by the creator god before birth. A person's destiny stems from a family ancestor (usually a grandparent) who is partly reborn in the person at birth and serves as a spiritual guardian throughout life. Although destinies are largely predetermined, they are also somewhat alterable for better or worse by the gods, witches, and guardian ancestors. To realize the full potential of one's destiny, frequent recourse to divination is required to discover what destiny has in store and to ensure the best outcome. Successes and failures in life are therefore attributed both to personal initiative and to inherited destiny. After death, this immortal aspect of the personality returns to the creator god, ready to be reborn in the same lineage group. In societies where the concept of destiny is absent, the most important life-determining principle is the person's inherited lineage component, and it is this that survives after death.

The human personality is also permeable by divinity. On ritual occasions the consciousness of an individual may become temporarily replaced by the presence of a spiritual being. Often the personality of the god resembles that of the individual, and professional mediums may have several gods or spirits at their command. These are said to mount "on the head" or "on the back" of the medium. Almost everyone is susceptible to spirit possession of some sort, and when controlled in a ritual manner it has therapeutic effect.

At death, new problems of social and spiritual identity arise. When a family loses one of its members, especially a senior male or female, a significant moral and social gap occurs. The family, together with other kinsmen, must close this gap through funerary procedures. At the same time the deceased must undergo spiritual adjustment if he or she is to find a secure place in the afterlife and remain in contact with the family left behind. This is accomplished by the construction of an ancestor shrine and sometimes also by the making of an ancestor mask and costume.

Almost every family and village has its ancestor

shrines, and every town its heroes who founded and protected it. From the beginning, the ancestors helped to create the world; they gave birth to the people, led them to their present homeland, created agriculture, established social rules, founded kingdoms, and invented metalworking and the arts. Their deeds laid the foundations of African myth, history, and culture. Whether the ancestors lived in the remote past or in more recent times, they are regarded as immortal spirits who transcend historical time. Through spirit possession and mediumship rites, the ancestors continue to communicate with their living descendants, who seek their help in the affairs of everyday life.

The carved images of the ancestors are not intended to be representational or abstract but conceptual and evocative. By means of stylized form and symbolic details the image conveys the characteristics of the ancestor and also helps to make the spiritual reality of the ancestor present among the people. Thus the carved ancestral icon enables the world of the living and the world of the living dead to come together for the benefit of human life.

The relationship between the community of the living and the spirits of the dead, sometimes misleadingly called "ancestor worship," has powerful social and psychological dimensions and plays a vital role in almost every African society. This is especially true in small-scale stateless societies in which sociopolitical rules are almost entirely governed by a descent system. In such societies ancestors are the focus of ritual activity, not because of a special fear of the dead or because of a strong belief in the afterlife, but because of the importance of the descent system in defining social relationships. In larger polities the royal ancestors often become the gods of the state. Superior to living kings and elders, the ancestors define and regulate social and political relations. It is they who own the land and the livestock, and it is they who regulate the prosperity of the lineage groups, villages, and kingdoms. Typically, when misfortune strikes, the ancestors are consulted through divination to discover what misdeeds have aroused their anger. The ancestors are also regularly thanked at ceremonial feasts for their watchful care, upon which the welfare of the community depends.

Not everyone may become an ancestor. Only those who led families and communities in the past as founders, elders, chiefs, or kings may serve in the afterlife as the social and political guides of the future. By contrast, ordinary people become ghosts after death. Such spirits require ritual attention at their graves, but they are finally sent away to "rest in peace," while the more positive influence of the ancestors is invoked generation after generation. The more recent ancestors receive the most frequent attention, especially at family shrines. Such ancestors are not worshiped in either a devotional or idolatrous sense but are honored and prayed to as the senior leaders of the living community.

The sufferings and misfortunes brought by the gods and ancestors are punishments aimed at correcting human behavior. By contrast, the sufferings and misfortunes caused by witches and sorcerers are undeserved and socially destructive; they are unequivocally evil. The African concept of evil is that of perverse humanity: the human witch and sorcerer. The African image of the witch and sorcerer is of humanity turned against itself. Witches act only at night, they fly through the air, walk on their hands or heads, dance naked, feast on corpses, possess unsatiable and incestuous lusts (despite sexual impotence), murder their relatives, and live in the bush with wild animals. This symbolic imagery is consistent with the sociological characteristics of the witch: disagreeable, ambitious, lying, and envious.

Accusations of witchcraft and sorcery therefore function as a means of social control. In the past accused witches and sorcerers were forced to confess or were killed or expelled from society. Witchcraft accusations also enabled quarreling members of the same lineage to separate from each other and establish their own residences, thus restoring village order. For the most part witchcraft accusations in Africa flourished in contexts where social interaction was intense but loosely defined, as between members of the same extended family or lineage group. In such cases witchcraft was sometimes thought to be an inherited power of which the individual might be unaware until accused. In other instances it existed in the form of deliberately practiced sorcery procedures, so-called black magic, which was effective at long range and across lineage groups. Whether deliberate or not, the witch and the sorcerer were regarded as fundamentally antihuman and thus as principles of evil in a world governed by fundamentally moral and social forces. [*See* Witchcraft, *article on* African Witchcraft.]

Shrines, Temples, and Religious Art. Shrines and temples serve as channels of communication with the spiritual world, and they may also serve as dwelling places of gods and spirits. Shrines may exist in purely natural forms, such as forest groves, large rocks, rivers, and trees, where gods and spirits dwell. Every African landscape has places of this kind that are the focus of ritual activity. Man-made shrines vary in form. A simple tree branch stuck into the ground is a shrine for a family ghost among the Nuer. A large rectangular building serves as the ancestor stool chapel among the Ashanti. Whatever its form, an African shrine acts as a symbolic crossroads, a place where paths of communi-

cation between the human and spiritual worlds intersect. If the shrine serves as a temple, that is, as the dwelling place of a spiritual being, it is built in houselike fashion, like the "palaces" of the royal ancestors in Buganda. Such shrines usually have two parts: the front section, where the priest and the people gather, and the rear section, where the god or spirit dwells. An altar stands between the two and links them together.

Shrines and temples often contain carved images of gods, spirits, and ancestors; indeed, such images sometimes serve as shrines themselves. [See Iconography, article on Traditional African Iconography.] Carved figures may function as altars for communication with spiritual beings and as physical embodiments of the spirits themselves. The Baule of the Ivory Coast carve figures to represent the spiritual spouse who everyone has in the otherworld before being born into this one. The human-shaped figure becomes a shrine through which the spirit may be propitiated. The Dan-speaking peoples of Liberia and the Ivory Coast carve wooden masks to represent and to embody forest spirits so that they may appear before the people of the villages.

More generally, African ritual art, including masks, headdresses, sacred staffs, and ceremonial implements, is fashioned according to definite stylistic forms in order to express religious ideas and major social values. The carved chi wara antelope headdress of the Bamana of Mali represents the mythic farming animal, called Chi Wara, that originally showed the people how to cultivate, and the antelope shape of the headdress expresses the qualities of the ideal farmer: strength, industriousness, and graceful form. Male and female headdresses are danced together, while women sing songs to encourage the young men's cultivation groups to compete with each other for high agricultural achievements. The Gẹlẹdẹ masks of the Yoruba honor the spiritual power of women, collectively known as "our mothers." This power is both creative (birth) and destructive (witchcraft). The Gẹlẹdẹ mask depicts the calm and serene face of a woman and expresses the feminine virtue of patience. The face is often surmounted by elaborately carved scenes of daily activity, for the spiritual power of "the mothers" is involved in every aspect of human life.

African traditional art is primarily concerned with the human figure because of the anthropocentric and anthropomorphic character of African religions. As we have seen, religion in Africa deals with the problems of human life, the causes of which are seen to be fundamentally human in nature. Thus social conflict produces illness, human misdeeds cause the gods and ancestors to bring misfortune, and the gods themselves are essentially human in character. African thought typ-

ically conceives of the unknown and invisible forces of life by analogy with human realities that are both knowable and controllable. Hence African sculpture represents the gods, spirits, and ancestors in a basically human form.

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Mythic Themes

It is common to regard myth as the chief intellectual product of nonliterate cultures (in analogy to philosophical and theological texts in literate civilizations). However, this would oversimplify the African situation. While African myths, as the "true dramas" explaining how the fundamental realities came to be, do often embody profound reflections, other forms of African wisdom exist that can be equally insightful and systematic or religiously significant. Ritual, for example, can often do without myth because it evokes the living experience of realities that are controlled by ritual symbols shaped over many generations. Proverbs may form the sole content of initiatic instruction, for although perhaps trivial taken one by one, their cumulative impact may transform one's vision of life and teach a poise or stance on life that may be said to be the chief fruit of religion. The more complex divinatory systems often embody a total classification of possible events in life and may ground it in a philosophy that is impersonal and elemental. The teachings of such proverbial, ritual, or divinatory systems may not be duplicated by myths. In fact, many African religions seem to function without many myths.

However, myths do provide us with a deep insight into African religions. But this is only so if we appreciate that many, if not most, of the published myths from African cultures deal with the quasi-folkloric tales available to outsiders and children. We cannot deny the existence of esoteric levels of mythology in many cultures. Of course, one culture's initiatic myth is often, in fragmentary form, another culture's childish tale, even though the narrative itself may remain the same. What has changed is the context, the overall meaning, and the integration of this story into a larger narrative vision. In interpreting African mythology, then, we must above all attend to that larger context and meaning if we are to discover the vision of the sources of reality that alone defines true myth.

Not all myth directly justifies everyday cultic life or social structures. For example, the powers that are invoked in the everyday cult of the LoDagaa of Ghana (the earth, ancestors, and medicine spirits) are hardly even mentioned in the initiatic myth of Bagre (which centers on God and the bush spirits: see Goody, 1972, p. 31, and the synopsis below under "Mediators between Order and Disorder"). But this is because the Bagre myth concerns the more primordial realities that lie behind and permit the concerns of the ordinary village cult and its associated spirits. In fact, it articulates the basic vision of life that animates the LoDagaa, without which they could not exist at all.

General Themes. We may orient ourselves for this brief survey by distinguishing four major sets of themes in the rich variety of African mythologies. This classification is naturally not meant to be exhaustive. The first set centers on the primordial personal encounter of humanity with God, in which human destiny—and especially the basic boundaries and limited conditions of life—is directly determined forever. The second major set of myths centers on the process of mediation, change, and renewal in the universe, focusing on the sometimes demiurgic figures who embodied this process in the beginning of time: the trickster, the smith, the diviner, and the kingly culture hero. The third major set centers on the ways in which the present universe in all its aspects is a creative equilibrium built up by such dynamic interacting opposites as male heaven and female earth (in the first phase of creation), culture hero and chthonic earth monster (or cruel ruler), sacral king and aboriginal peoples, and even competing brothers or wedded twins (in the next phase). Sexuality, battle, and sacrifice control the transformations of this mythic history. The fourth set of major themes include highly philosophical esoteric myths found in many Sudanic and West African religions; these theosophical syntheses, known only to the highest initiates, center on concepts of the cosmic egg or the primal word, and the inner mysteries of sacrifice.

The Personal Encounter with God. Many African religions take the basic forms of the universe for granted, and their creation myths center instead on the development of the human condition. In any case, God is usually the central actor in these myths. It must be stressed that African religions universally acknowledge a supreme being, and there is often a direct cult to him, which may be personal (prayers to God morning and night) or communal (during such crises as famine or drought). Such cults can even be formal and enacted periodically by the group as a whole. A basic trait of the African supreme being is that he determines destiny, both personal and (in the creation myths) universal human destiny. These myths turn on that assumption.

One myth, found throughout the Sudan (the region of northern Africa between the Sahara and the rainy tropics that extends from the Atlantic to the Red Sea) and in coastal West Africa, explains that God once dwelt close to or on the earth (for heaven was near then) until an accidental offense against him (or actual disobedience, usually by a woman wanting more or better food) compelled God to remove the heavens far away and to break his direct link with humanity. The Ashanti (southern Ghana) say that God, Nyame (also known as Onyankopon), withdrew heaven from the earth because

he was annoyed when the low floor of heaven was knocked from below by the pestle of an old woman who was pounding *fufu* (mashed yams). So he climbed up to heaven on a thread, like the Great Spider (Ananse Kokroko) that he is. Mischievous still, the old woman ordered her children to build a tower of mortars, one atop another, right to the sky. Needing one more mortar, the children took it from the bottom—and the whole edifice collapsed, killing many. The theme of the pestle knocking against heaven is surprisingly common in these myths. It would seem to link both eating and the major task of the culture, farming, to alienation from God. Among the Mbuti Pygmies of the Ituri forest in Zaire, a basically similar mythic structure involves hunting instead, as the Mbuti do not farm. The first Pygmy provided food for God by hunting, and the Pygmy's two wives cooked and served the deity's meals, but were forbidden to look directly upon him. The youngest wife stole a look, and so the Pygmies were banished from heaven to earth, to hard work and death.

The Dinka (southern Sudan) say that there used to be a rope that hung down from heaven, and people could climb it when they wished to speak to God. But when the woman kept hitting the underside of heaven with her pestle, God withdrew the heavens and had the rope cut. A variant Dinka myth attributes the original split between humanity and divinity to fratricidal clan conflicts. The Nuer, a neighboring ethnic group closely related to the Dinka, say that when people grew old they would climb the rope, become young again, then come down and begin life anew. But one day the hyena (often the symbol or animal form of witches), which had been exiled from heaven, cut the rope. Since then people have not been able to renew their lives, and they die instead. The Lozi, or Rotse (northwestern Zambia), say that the arrogant, disobedient, and murderous tendencies of the first humans so irritated God that he finally sought to flee from them. But they pursued him everywhere. At a loss for a hiding place, God consulted the divining bones, which referred him to the spider. At God's order, the spider spun a thread to heaven, and God and his family ascended into the sky. The myth goes on to relate that the first ancestors tried to reach God even then by building a tower of cut trees—but the tower crashed down.

The motif of the tower built to reach heaven is very common in the versions of the separation of heaven and earth myth found among central Bantu-speaking peoples. The Luba (Zaire) say that humanity originally lived in the same village as God. But the creator wearied of the constant quarreling in the village and exiled humanity to earth (village quarreling even today is said

to anger God, harm hunting and the crops, and even prevent pregnancies and increase deaths). There humans suffered hunger and cold and, for the first time, sickness and death. Following the advice of a diviner, who told them to go back to heaven to regain immortality, the people began building an enormous wooden tower, which after months of labor reached the sky. The workers at the top signaled their success by beating a drum and playing flutes, but God hated the noise and destroyed the tower, killing the musicians. The Kaonde, Lwena, Lamba, Lala, Chokwe, and other peoples date their dispersion from this event.

It is evidently dangerous to be too close to God; humanity cannot endure such powerful fusions. The human condition is only possible when God mercifully veils himself behind his creation and spirits. One example of this view is the attitude of the Bantu-speaking peoples to the rainbow being, considered a serpent spirit that is dangerous even to see. It links heaven and earth, or male and female life principles; its appearance "drives away" the rains and brings drought. It is considered a primary agent or, in some cases, as even a form of God.

There are many kinds of myths that explain how death entered the world. Most common is the myth of two messengers or the perverted message. According to this myth, God sent two messengers to humanity, the first with the command that humans would never die, the second with the command that they would. But the first messenger (usually the chameleon, an animal with certain resemblances to the variegated rainbow) traveled too slowly, and the second (often the lizard or hare) arrived first. The first declaration to be given "fixed" human nature forever. On the other hand, death may be blamed on the primordial exile from God's presence. Or it may be said that humanity was told to stay awake to await God's arrival with the declaration of human immortality, but everyone fell asleep and missed it. There is a complex irony in this story, for it turns on the view that sleep is a foretaste of death. Only if humans were already immortal would they have been able to banish sleep. Being mortal, they succumbed to sleep—and to death. The seeming arbitrariness of all of these myths of personal interaction with God masks a deeper necessity; however, when examined more closely, this necessity merely affirms that what is, is, and so is again arbitrary. The real significance of such myths, perhaps, is that finitude or arbitrary limitation is the very essence of life: only God escapes it, and he has ordained the present order.

Throughout Africa, the distinctions between social groups are explained by choices made before God in the

beginning of time. The Nyoro (eastern Uganda) say that Kintu, the first man, asked God to assign the fates and names of his three sons. God therefore placed six gifts in their path. The eldest immediately seized the bundle of food and began eating, carrying off what remained with the help of the head ring, grabbing with his free hands the ax and the knife. And so he showed himself to be the ancestral "peasant" *(kairu)*, greedy and impulsive. The second son picked up the leather thong, which was used to tie cattle, so his destiny was that of the "herder" *(kahuma or huma)*. And the youngest son took the ox's head, a sign that he was the head, or "ruler" *(kakama)*, of all.

In the countless versions of this fateful gifts myth, found everywhere in sub-Saharan Africa, it is almost always the youngest brother who gets the best fate. God is shown as the determiner of destiny *par excellence*. And surprisingly, the foolish ancestor who chooses the wrong gift is often the founder of the people who tell the story, an occurrence that was perhaps especially prevalent during the colonial period. In the common topical adaptations of the myth, White Man was the youngest brother, African the eldest. Sometimes cultural distinctions arise out of other kinds of events, however. The Shilluk (southern Sudan) say that when God began to create men, he made them from light-colored clays, so that the "white" men emerged. Later, when his hands were a bit soiled, the "red" Arabs and Turks were formed. But toward the end, his hands were so dirty that the black-skinned Shilluk were the result. The Fang of Gabon used to say that in the beginning God lived with his three sons, White Man, Black Man, and Gorilla. But Black Man and Gorilla disobeyed God, so he withdrew to the west coast with his white son and gave all his wealth and power to him. Gorilla retreated into the forest depths, while the unhappy black people followed the sun to the west. There they found the white people, who slowly poisoned them (with malaria). As a result of this contact, they languish now, dying, and thinking of the time when they lived with God and were happy.

Mediators between Order and Disorder. Perhaps the most surprising of the mythic mediators between the primordial flux and the eventual divine order is the trickster. [See Tricksters, *article on* African Tricksters.] Certainly one part of the meaning of the African trickster is well summarized by the blunt name given him by the Nkundo (central Zaire): Itonde ("death"). Itonde has many traits linking him to the typical culture hero. Born to the first human couple, Itonde matured rapidly and soon became a ruler. However, he behaved cruelly and rapaciously (giving us a stereotypic image of the

bad king); for example, he slaughtered huge numbers of the aboriginal Pygmies. But like so many African culture heroes and archetypal kings, Itonde set himself to conquer all aboriginal powers, including Indombe, the fiery (rainbow?) serpent, ruler of the forest depths and of the Pygmies. As the master of the serpent, Itonde gained possession of the land, while the serpent obediently went down into the river to control the waters and rain at Itonde's bidding.

Among Itonde's other achievements were the creation of the two staple agricultural crops, bananas and sugar cane. Sugar cane is the fruit of two murders. Indombe had killed Itonde's brother, so in revenge Itonde hunted down a surrogate of Indombe. This victim, an anonymous "man of the forest," tried to escape by turning into a sugar cane, but Itonde seized him and killed and buried him. From his body sprang sugar cane plants, indicating that sacrificial death is creative.

Itonde's own death, which released his power into the world permanently, came about through the disobedient and selfish desire of a wife for food. Pregnant and gnawed by strange appetites, she demanded a certain rare fruit available only in a dangerous region. When Itonde died seeking it, the waters oozing from his body formed the first marsh rivers (evidently, Itonde and the water serpent Indombe were strangely akin). From his corpse the first maggots emerged. His wife later gave birth to all the other insects, as well as to the six ancestors of the Nkundo and related cultures and, last of all, to Lianja, the ideal king. So from Itonde, the trickster Death, come the essentials of farming culture, including the major food crops and the changing seasons, as well as the main lines of social organization and kingship, with all the suffering and joy that they imply. Human life in its entirety comes from Death.

The Banda (Central African Republic) say that God had two sons, Ngakola, who breathed life into the first man, and Tere, the spirit of excess and confusion. Tere was assigned the task of taking all the animal species and the life-giving waters down from heaven in baskets. But, like the Luba towerbuilders discussed above, Tere was overeager to announce his gifts to humanity and he beat his drum while still descending. The baskets slipped from his grasp and crashed to earth, scattering all the species and waters. Tere tried to recapture the animals; those he caught became the domestic species and those that escaped changed their original nature and became wild. The same happened with the plants, creating the distinctions between wild and cultivated species. Throughout the Sudanic region figures much like Tere crop up; in the eastern Sudan they sometimes even have the same name. In the area where the central

Sudanic savanna merges into the Zaire forest, the Band-ziri, Yakoma, and Azande call him Tule or Tore; the Mangbetu speak of their trickster as Azapane and the Babua as Mba; the Manja call him Bele while the Mbuti Pygmies tell tales of Tore.

According to the Mbuti, Tore kept fire and sexuality for himself in the primordial forest; his "old mother" would warm herself by the fire while he swung through the forest trees like a monkey. Meanwhile the first human couple shivered in the cold, wet undergrowth. Finally, the first man stole the embers of fire from the side of the sleeping woman and raced off into the forest; Tore chased him and recovered the fire several times but at last failed. The old woman "died" of the cold, transforming herself into the vengeful Mother of the Forest, who ensnares solitary hunters, abducts small children, and rules the dead but who also occasionally blesses chosen hunters with exceptional luck. But Tore, enraged at the theft and the death of his mother, cursed humanity with death. He still roams the forest, especially in the form of the rainbow serpent.

Stories of Tore found among Bantu-speaking peoples may have been influenced by the Pygmy myths; the Azande say that Tore (whom they identify with the spider) gave people water by stealing it from an old woman who had hidden it. He gave them fire, too, although it was the accidental result of a visit to the smith spirits: his loincloth caught fire, and as he fled through the forest he begged the fire to leave him and pass into the trees instead. The fire did so, which is why it emerges now when sticks are rubbed together.

In general, the trickster appears most distinct in West African and Sudanic cultures, but he appears elsewhere, too. We encounter him in South Africa among the Sotho and Venda as Huveane, a figure who is part god and part culture hero. Some of the San also call the creator of all life Huve; they pray to him in the hunt, and he presides over initiations. Huve may have been borrowed from their Bantu-speaking neighbors, but the Kaggen, or Cagn, of the southern San is clearly their own creator-trickster figure and shows that the basic concepts are native to them. The Bantu Huveane ("little Huve") is also the hero of many trivial adventures. Growing up with startling speed, he plays many tricks on his parents and neighbors, but his parents prosper wondrously and the other villagers are beside themselves with rage and jealousy. They conspire to kill him but are constantly made to look like fools. Finally, it is said, Huveane ascended to heaven, but he will return one day to bring happiness and prosperity to humanity.

The favorite trickster of the Bantu-speaking peoples, however, has nothing to do with creation or with the primordial shaping of culture: he is the folkloric Hare (among some cultures, Jackal), prototype of Br'er Rabbit in the tales of "Uncle Remus." The primordial and creative roles of the trickster in most Bantu cultures seem to have been absorbed by the general figure of the "aboriginal ruler" (often monstrous or serpentine) who is defeated by the archetypal king, the second, more refined culture hero, thus establishing human society.

Divination is one of the chief ways of dealing with disorder and generating order out of it. Often the trickster is the primordial diviner as well as the patron of diviners; in particular, the various spider tricksters, which exist in cultures ranging from Mali and Ghana through to Zaire, are almost always associated with divination. The first diviner is a significant figure in many myths. There are several different versions, for example, of how the Ifa or Fa divinatory system (used by the Yoruba of Nigeria and the Fon of Benin, Togo, and Ghana) came to be. A common Yoruba account has it that the supreme being, Olorun, or Olodumare, created two beings to rule the world on his behalf, Obatala (also called Orisa-nla), demiurge and royal archetype, and Orunmila (or Ifa), source of wisdom. Orunmila signifies "only heaven can effect salvation" and shows that Orunmila is, in effect, merely the mouthpiece of God. Obatala was killed one day by an evil slave, but Orunmila collected his scattered remains together, ordered them, and deposited them throughout the world; from this have arisen the cults to the many orisa, the ("divinities"). Orunmila moved constantly between heaven and earth in those days, solving problems not only for humanity but even for the orisa, who also consulted him. His eight children founded the various Yoruba kingdoms. One day, insulted by one of his children, Orunmila withdrew to heaven, and the forces of life ceased to operate on earth: sterility and death affected the fields as well as humanity. (This reminds us that Orunmila's constant companion is the trickster Esu, a tiny man with a huge phallus, the very image of procreative powers.) The eight children of Orunmila came to him in a delegation, begging him to return, but he refused, giving each of them sixteen palm nuts instead. These sixteen nuts composed a "person" who could be consulted on all questions of life. Orunmila was thus present in them.

The Fon of Dahomey explain their Fa system with similar myths. Around Porto Novo, it is said that Fa was a formless or round man without members or bones, so he could not personally "do" anything. But all the powerful, including the vodoun ("gods"), revered him like a king. However, the accumulated resentments of those humans who did not like Fa's adherence to ab-

solute truth—or, according to other accounts, the jealousy of Xevioso, the thunder god—led to Fa being sliced to pieces. Those pieces produced a sixteen-branched palm tree or the sixteen palm nuts themselves, from which the immortal Fa still speaks.

The primordial smith is one of the chief mediatory figures in African mythology. The manipulation of creative fires (often associated with the sources of sexual generation) and the working of earth substances into cultural products have often been regarded throughout Africa as a paradigm and repetition of creation. From southern Africa to the westernmost Sudan, the smith is often the presiding elder at initiation ceremonies, the traditional healer called upon to find witches and expel their influences, and the priestly repository of the deepest mysteries. In myths, he is often the chief agent of God on earth, the demiurge who shapes the world and culture, and/or the trickster.

Among the Yoruba, Ogun, the god of iron and patron of smiths, was the first to descend to the earth while it was still a marshy wasteland. He cleared the way for the other gods. But he preferred the wastelands, for there he could hunt, and there he still rules as the deity of hunters and warriors as well as of all artisans. When Obatala had finished molding the physical form of the first ancestors, Ogun took over and made the final details, as he did to the whole of creation. He still presides over initiations, for the finishing touches of culture, such as circumcision and the tribal markings of initiation, belong to him. Surgeons must worship him, too, as must all those who make oaths or covenants or undergo judicial ordeals.

The Fali (Cameroon) conceive of the primal ancestor as a smith who descended from heaven on a bean stalk with a chest or box, which escaped from him (much as the baskets escaped from the Banda trickster Tere) and fell to the earth, disintegrating into four triangles. These four divisions contained all the animal and plant species; the initiated know the classes still, although the fall scattered the creatures throughout the earth. Each class has twelve subdivisions. Every aspect of Fali life is ruled by these correspondences and harmonies, putting back into order what the primal smith disordered.

According to the Dogon (Mali), all of the primal spirits, or Nommo, were smiths, masters of creative fire. One of these escaped from heaven and descended to earth on the rainbow with the ark that he had stolen; it contained the fiery essences of all species, ranged in their proper categories. The first ancestors were also in this ark (which is alternately described as a basket, granary, anvil, or womb). The ark was a picture of the entire world system, which according to some Dogon was akin to a living being, a female, mate to the smith. The

smith also bore with him his hammer, which represented the male element and contained the seeds of life. The descent of the smith was not an easy one: he had to fight off the other heavenly spirits, who resented his theft. The descent became uncontrolled and ended with a crash, causing the animals, plants, and human groups in the ark to scatter in the four directions, and even breaking the serpentine, flexible limbs of the smith, so that henceforth human beings would have elbows, wrists, hips, knees, and ankles, permitting them to work.

It is said that another primal spirit, in the form of a serpent, immediately engaged the thief in battle but was killed. Its body was given to humanity to eat (or was used as the model for the first cultivated field), while the head was placed under the first smithy forge. Every smithy thereafter is symbolically situated on the head of the primal Nommo-serpent (West African smiths are often thought to have mystical links to serpents). This serpent is the symbolic mate of the first smith, and the smithing process is a kind of spiritual intercourse in which the beautiful things that are shaped are the symbolic offspring. Every time the smith strikes the anvil with his hammer, generative vibrations go forth that are like the first scattering of the seeds of life; these are shaped by the smith into the forms of culture. The smith is therefore the human embodiment of the demiurge.

The smith, in these myths, has a peculiar link to disorder and the wilderness as well as to culture. He joins both. The Dogon smith is even thought to wander in the bush still, in the form of the "pale fox" known as Yurugu, or Ogo, the Dogon trickster and patron of divination. So it is not surprising to find that in some cultures smithing is directly revealed to humanity by the spirits of the bush. The LoDagaa (Ghana) teach their middle-level Bagre initiates that in the beginning there were two brothers who were "troubled" by God until Younger Brother set off to find a solution. Overcoming several obstacles, including the crossing of an impassable river, he passed into a forest where he met with the beings of the wild, the bush spirits who control hunting and fishing even today. They taught him how to be a farmer, to clear the bush and plant grain, to harvest it and to cook it. They also taught how to make fire, how to forge metal, and even what tools to make. Finally, they revealed how to make a smelter and how to be a smith. Following this, Younger Brother, now the ancestral smith, had a vision of the primal essences of the universe engaged in generative intercourse: the rain mated with the earth. A tree was created by this intercourse, which lifted him to heaven. There God instructed him directly in the mysteries of sexuality and family life.

A major theme in the myths of mediatory figures, as we have seen, is creative sacrifice. Such sacrifice often marks the break between the primal era of flux and the following heroic age when the basic elements of the divine order are clearly established. Fittingly, the foundation myths of kingship and other chiefly offices often include an account of how the king sacrificed his main opponent (the aboriginal ruler) or a surrogate of him and thus began his kingly office. The sacrifice equates to the determination of order out of disorder. A common variant has the hero himself sacrificed, so that his spirit may live on in those who possess his regal implements and who fulfill his role (in a kind of eternal spirit possession). So it is with the Dogon priest-chief, the *hogon*, whose career is modeled on the exemplary death and sacrifice of the first *hogon*, Lébé (whose death, in turn, mirrors the sacrifice of the serpent opponent of the first smith). Human sacrifices therefore often marked the installation of kings, and the royal candidate himself might have to go through a symbolic death and resurrection, being "killed" as a natural human being or "aboriginal ruler" so that he can be revived as primordial king made flesh. Aged or blemished kings were actually sacrificed in some cultures so that the archetypal royal spirit inhabiting them might be released and be able to take over the offered body of the candidate.

The Shilluk say that their founding king, Nyikang, left his home country and traveled to the Nile. The waters parted, and he walked across on dry land, or, as it is more usually said, a white albino slave bore him across the river (he could not touch the waters himself). The slave, tainted by this "sacrilegious" contact, was sacrificed on the other side, and Nyikang walked between the two halves of his body, symbolically entering into and possessing the new land. He went on to conquer the native inhabitants and to institute culture, marrying the daughter of the aboriginal chief and so becoming husband to the land she embodied. Some myths claim that Nyikang was the offspring of a waterspirit, the crocodile mother of water creatures; this is why he has control over the rains, the Nile floods, and the fertility of the land. However, when a king's generative powers begin to slacken (his watery semen cease to flow, drought occur, famine or disease spread, etc.), he must "disappear" and allow the spirit of Nyikang to be passed on intact and unblemished. The ritualized installation of the successor imitates the myth of Nyikang's first conquest of the land, even down to such details as the sacrifice of an albino slave.

The Dinka, neighbors to the Shilluk who share many of their cultural values, are led by spear masters (priests who "own" the land) and war leaders (metaphorically, younger nephews of the spear masters, their

maternal uncles). The various accounts of how the spear masters first appeared agree that in the beginning there was a spirit or ancestor called Aiwel Longar (born, some say, after the river impregnated a human woman). Aiwel Longar was powerful and mischievous even as a child, and he eventually fled hostile human society to live with the river spirit for a time. After he returned, his prosperity made people jealous, for their herds were perishing in a drought. (We recall the similar history of such tricksters as Huveane.) Finally, Aiwel Longar offered to lead all of them to paradisiacal pastures, but they refused and set off on their own. The crucial event of the myth then follows, alike in all versions. Aiwel Longar laid in wait for them at a river, and as they tried to cross it, metaphorically like fish, he speared them as Dinka fishermen spear fish. One leader (differing in name according to the subtribe telling the myth) placed an ox's sacrum on his head as he crossed through the reeds, and Longar's spear was deflected. A substitutionary ox sacrifice was henceforth the basis of cultic ritual. Longar confessed himself beaten and bestowed the powers of the spear masters on the leader who had outwitted him; he also established other major features of culture. In one verison, Longar was speared by God in punishment; his head and body pinned to the ground, Longar joined heaven and earth (just like the spear masters). Thus impaled, Longar promised his help to humanity and "disappeared." Spear masters, his embodiments since then, are actually buried alive when they grow too old, releasing their spirits to continue their cultic mediation. [*See* Nuer and Dinka Religion.]

Binary Oppositions and Interchanges. Almost universal in African mythologies is a dialectical interchange between male and female elements to produce the various aspects of the world. A creation myth of the marriage of heaven and earth often lays the groundwork. We may take the Zulu (South Africa) example as the occasion for a closer look. [*See also* Southern African Religions, *article on* Southern Bantu Religions, *and* Zulu Religion.]

There has been some controversy concerning the status of uNkulunkulu in Zulu religion, but it appears probable that he is merely a culture hero given demiurge status, while the supreme being should be identified specifically with iNkosi yeZulu, "heavenly lord" (a title rather than a proper name, for one ought not presume to name the great directly, especially when in their presence!). E. W. Smith, in his *African Ideas of God* (London, 1961), has observed that while uNkulunkulu was spoken of as creator, it is in terms of his making things below as the agent and slave of God above (p. 108). A praise name of iNkosi yeZulu indicates this priority, which, with the fate-determining power, is one

of the chief characteristics of the African supreme being: uZivelele ("he who came of himself into being"). Prayers used to be offered to iNkosi yeZulu for rain, and when storms were too frightening, rain doctors would pray to the celestial god as follows: "Move away, thou Lord of the Lord, move away, thou greatest of friends, move away, thou . . . Irresistible One!" (ibid., p. 109). God is also too close in thunderstorms or when the mist veils the earth; then people should stay indoors, for the lightning bird, sent by God, may strike down the guilty or unfortunate.

But if iNkosi yeZulu is self-created, he is also the "firstborn" of serpentine twins, and the earth is his female twin. The rain is likened to the semen of God (a widespread conception among Bantu-speaking peoples). Every spring the Zulu nation celebrated the nuptials of Heaven and Earth, the latter embodied in the ever-virginal uNomkhubulwana, or iNkosazana. Sometimes also called "the daughter of the firstborn," she is said to be "everything": river on one side, forest on the other, laden with all kinds of food, and surrounded by mist. The rainbow and the python are both identified with her and are forms of her or her servants; there is a giant python said to dwell in a sacred pool, surrounded by lesser snakes, the metamorphosed ancestral spirits. The python has a special relationship with the rainmaker "doctor": when rain is needed, the doctor goes out to a certain rock in the pool in the dead of night. The snake emerges, licks off the fat from sheep or goat skins covering the motionless doctor, and recharges the medicines lying about. They will be used the next day to bring rain. Similarly, diviners are initiated by entering the pool in trance and meeting the great python under water. They may find giant mating serpents ruling there.

The marriage of the mythic archetypes Heaven and Earth provides the basic framework for such beliefs and can be symbolized by the mating of twin water serpents. From this all life originally comes. The ancestors return to dwell with the python being, too. Among some central Bantu-speaking peoples, the entire creation is said to have begun with two mating serpents or from within a giant serpent womb. In any case, the marriage of Heaven and Earth explains the otherwise enigmatic Zulu myth of the origin of humanity: the first ancestral couple emerged from a reed growing in swampland. Myths of the emergence of humanity from underground, or the primeval swamp, usually via a sacred plant or tree, are very common. Initiates throughout Africa are often made to emerge from actual or symbolic underground tunnels and/or to lie "gestating" beneath certain trees for long periods of time. As Jacqueline Roumeguère-Eberhardt has also shown, the symbolisms of

Venda and other South African initiations, in which novices are said to lie within the womb of a great serpent, are precisely repeated in the initiatic symbolisms of such distant peoples as the Fulbe of West Africa. The Dogon also conceptualize the earth as a womb from which the first ancestors emerged via a bamboo. The first couple had been nurtured by serpentine twin spirits, the Nommo, in their underground placental chamber.

Following the mythic era in which Heaven and Earth generated the first forms of life comes the epoch of the culture hero and the founding of culture. Chieftaincy and kingship are legitimated by these myths, which installation rites may reenact. Here, too, the binary oppositions are repeated. They may be represented by the struggle of the culture hero with the forces of the primeval earth. The battle is often resolved by a conquest that is symbolized by a sacrificial rite, and is stabilized by a sexual relationship. Conquest, sacrifice, and sexuality are three powerful metaphors of transformation. For example, the Korekore, a Shona people of Chakoma District (Zimbabwe), say that Nyanhehwe, the ancestral culture hero who settled this area for the Korekore, had to fight the earth serpent Dzivaguru, who ruled the region and laid it to waste. It was a battle of forceful cunning against the magic of the earth, but Dzivaguru finally conceded defeat and even offered to share his mystical powers and medicines before retiring into the mountain pool where his shrine is still located. He also taught Nyanhehwe the social laws and the proper cult for obtaining rain from him. (These events may be compared with the history of Itonde and Indombe among the Nkundo, related earlier.) The culture hero henceforth viewed the earth as his wife, although this is a reciprocally applicable symbolism, since chiefs have had to offer virgins periodically to the spirit as its "wives": some maintained the shrine, and some were ritually drowned in the pool. The rainmaker priests who preside over the shrine and its sacrificial cult protect the king mystically and are "feminine" to him.

Luc de Heusch has shown that throughout the central Bantu-speaking area and beyond, there is a complex mythic pattern involving a culture hero's conquest of a monstrous or uncouth opponent (an elder brother, a savage earlier ruler, or even a magician who turns eventually into a water serpent and goes down to rule the dead and the rains from the depths of a river or pool). The culture hero may be the Sun, who conquers his elder or twin brother, the Moon, thus instituting the primacy of day over night and culture over nature. (Formerly the sun and moon were of equal brightness.)

The Luba (Zaire) explain that the first king was an egalitarian but savage ruler of Pygmies, given to coarse habits and impulsive violence. This king, Nkongolo,

who now assumes the form of a rainbow serpent, had two sisters, one of whom married a refined stranger, Mbiti Kiluwe. Mbiti's aristocratic ways shamed Nkongolo, and Mbiti was finally driven away by the king. But the sister gave birth to Mbiti's son, Kalala Ilunga, whom Nkongolo hated almost from his birth; after various conflicts, the king was prevented from attacking his infant rival because the infant had managed to flee to the other side of a river that the king could not cross (many African sacred kings are prohibited from setting foot in water, lest they fuse instantaneously with their true spiritual element, change into a water being, and leave the land and the people without the fertilizing presence of their ruler). This Luba Herod was finally decapitated by Kalala Ilunga, his body placed in the river and his head in a termite mound (termite mounds are generally regarded in central Africa as residences of the dead) or in the king's ritual hut. When the rainbow rises up and unites the body with the head, humanity cannot endure: this is the time of annual summer drought. The Luba also picture the rainbow as mating serpents, Nkongolo committing incest with his sister or heaven uniting with earth. Only when Kalala Ilunga "decapitates" the serpent and separates the halves of the body can the mediated human order and culture arise, with the gentler fusions of controlled rains aiding the growth of life instead of overwhelming it. So it is possible to sow and reap and depend on the seasonal recapitulation of archetypal myths. The Shilluk concepts outlined earlier belong in the same framework. This is why the death of a sacral king, embodiment of the culture hero, requires the reenactment of the basic symbolisms of the hero myth and even of the primal creation to reconstitute the world and its distinct gradations.

These polar oppositions are repeated endlessly in everyday life and thought. The Ila (Zambia) believe that every human being is shaped in the fiery womb by two tiny serpentine creatures (*bapuka*), an "inert" male and an active female who molds the semen and menstrual blood into the infant. The Ila homestead is likened to a similar womb in which the mother and father cooperate in procreating and then molding the children. The upper frame of each doorway has two breasts modeled on it and a symbol of fire placed below them, all of which is enclosed in the figure of an undulating serpent. Every granary has the same symbols modeled on it, and a basically similar symbolism controls smithing and even the entire layout of villages.

Our examples have thus far been taken primarily from Bantu cultures, but as has been hinted already, similar oppositions appear in West African religions. According to the research of Amaury Talbot in *The Peoples of Southern Nigeria* (London, 1926), the figures

of a celestial, fertilizing supreme being and a chthonic generative earth mother are encountered throughout this region and in nearly every tribe. There is often a direct cult to the supreme being, but we may find that the earth mother, as the nearest intermediary to God or, indeed, even as God herself, is more emphasized. God may be addressed as male in certain spheres and female in others. The people of the Nike region among the Igbo hold Chukwu to be the "maker of everything," the one who divided the cosmos into two parts: the female Earth (Ani) and the male Sky (Igwe). Both reflect Chukwu. Each is in turn divided into two parts by the east-west travel of the (male) Sun and the south-north travel of the (female) Moon, creating not only the four directions but also the four days of the Igbo week. So, as in many cultures of the region, a constantly redoubled binary opposition shapes all levels of life. Villages in the Nike region are spatially and socially divided into "upper" celestial indigenes and "lower" earthly immigrants. Some villages extend this into a quadruple division. Even the most abstract expressions of southern Nigerian thought, such as the Ifa divinatory system, are shaped out of the doubled and redoubled combinations of male and female potencies, the "father" and "mother" creating the four spirits of the cardinal points, and these "children" creating the rest of the sixteen primal signs. These three generations, in their further interaction, generate the total of 256 signs, each of which represents some element of reality.

R. S. Rattray, in *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland* (London, 1932), a survey of cultures farther to the west in West Africa and extending up to the sub-Saharan savanna, found the identification of the earth with a "wife" of the celestial supreme being "without exception" in all ethnic groups of the area, and her cult is central to the religions there. Sacrifices to her at tree shrines (the forest and the earth being identified) punctuate the seasonal calendar. The dead dwell with her. These ethnic groups also have earth priests as the heads of their clans, appointed from the "direct descendants" of the aboriginal settlers of the region. The legitimacy of kings who have invaded and conquered local peoples rests on their ritualized good relations with the earth priests. Often, however, chieftaincy and priesthood are merged in the same person (as in the case of the Dogon *hogon*). There is also a very sharp distinction made between the spirits of the cultivated fields and those of the bush. The Ashanti themselves, with their associated cultures, distinguish between Asase Afwa, earth mother of the cultivated fields, and Asase Yaa, her jealous sister of the underworld.

Many of the myths of these cultures deal with the question of how the wilderness emerged out of the gar-

den of the primal era and came to almost overwhelm the scattered human settlements of the present. For from the beginning God intended for the world to be a tilled garden without bloodshed, work, hunting, or sorrow.

The Bambara (Mali), a Mande people of the western Sudanic region who formerly ruled a vast empire, developed their answer in astonishing detail and profundity. We can only sketch the general outlines of their cosmogonic myth here because it is complex and exists in many versions. In the beginning, pure consciousness, or nothingness (*yo*), sought to know itself. Two mighty efforts at this task in succession formed two androgynous demiurges. The first, Pemba, contained all potentialities in still inchoate form, while the second, Faro, brought these potentialities into clear harmony and realization. Faro designed and created the heavens and the earth and eventually created the first human couple, distinct male and female, to counter the violent and clumsy sexual dualism created by Pemba. Pemba, seeking to rule over all, had planted himself in the earth as the first tree and generated from it a feminine being, the deformed woman Mousso Koroni Koundyé. Thus Pemba wrenched from himself his female half and together with it in bloody and violent intercourse generated all plants and animals. When Faro created humans, Pemba sought to rule them too, especially lusting after the women. Mousso Koroni Koundyé went mad with frustrated longing and jealousy and roamed the wastelands (as she still does), struggling to create life all by herself with the first crude agriculture. She also circumcised and excised all humans she met so that they would share her mutilations and pain, and to spite Pemba she told them his secrets. Thus the initiation cults were founded.

When Mousso Koroni Koundyé was no longer pregnant, she menstruated, thus bequeathing this to women as well. She polluted the earth, creating the true wilderness from this pollution, and then she died, thus introducing death into the world. Faro had to intervene and restore order to the universe; he overcame Pemba and taught the proper ways of farming in order to purify the earth from Mousso Koroni Koundyé. He revealed true speech and culture and reformed the cults. Blacksmiths continue to embody him in the world and, as such, they preside over initiations. Faro dwells in the terrestial and celestial waters, purifying and fertilizing the earth. The purpose of farming and of human domestic and cultural life is to cooperate with Faro in extending purity and divine order throughout the world, regenerating and transforming it. [*See* Bambara Religion.]

An oddly similar answer to the problem of wilderness, as we may call it (the African form of the problem of evil, in a way), is given by the Fali (Cameroon), a people who live far from the Bambara. They believe that the universe is the result of the energies spiraling from two cosmic eggs. One, of the female toad (a water creature, cold and wet), spun to the west, like the sun; the other, of the male tortoise (a creature of dry land) spun to the east. These were twins. Within each egg, the contents turned in the opposite direction from the shell, constituting a kind of intercourse of male seed and female moisture, the twins within each egg. When the eggs touched, they shattered and projected outward two square earths (one black, the other red), each containing a half of all plant and animal life. The Tortoise aligned and joined the two earths so that they stopped spinning and were still. The eastern sector was the human, domesticated world, but the wilderness of the west was ruled by the black dog being, the smith. Descending from heaven the smith had touched down with the dawn in the east and planted the eight main grains in the center of the world. In this he obeyed God, for hunting had been forbidden; but he loved to hunt and eventually ignored God's command. So a drought came, forcing the smith to ascend to heaven. God lowered a new ark containing the seeds of life to the earth, but the evil smith again intervened, cutting the vine stalk and causing the ark to fall into a sterile land where it shattered into four parts (as recounted in an earlier section). So the world now stands, with the wilderness surrounding the habitations of humanity everywhere.

The task of the Fali is to re-create the original harmony of the two eggs and the balances established in the ark. The society is divided into two intermarrying clans—the Tortoise and Toad—and their interrelations must be in accord with the divine plan. Relations between husband and wife are also shaped by this motive. Every house is built so as to duplicate the ark, every village is laid out with this in mind, and the slightest rules of social and political life are structured in terms of the creation myth. Despite the false start given to culture by the evil smith (who continues to govern the wild), human life is directed by the desire to limit the disintegrations of chaos.

A penetrating point made by these myths is that human culture as we know it is not only shaped by a divine order or revelation but is also the product of a divine misdirection and perversity. The very cult that humanity celebrates is in part based on falsehood, a falsehood of the spirits. The myth of the Bagre initiation cult, among the LoDagaa, actually stresses this point explicitly several times: our present life and even our cult is the product of the lies and tricks of God and the bush spirits! Nonetheless it remains a (generally) effective cult, and to preserve the ancestral beauties of this

pitiful human condition, we must continue it! The culture hero and trickster myths are illuminated by such unsentimental and unflinching comments.

Cosmic Egg and Primal Word: Theosophical Myths. As the above accounts indicate, many Sudanic and West African religions contain astonishing speculations known only to the higher ranks of the initiated. These speculations must often be called "theosophical," for they attempt to describe the inner unfolding of the divine life itself, God's internal history, which is identified often enough with the universe's own coming-to-be. In two long articles Germaine Dieterlen (1955 and 1959) tried to show that a common myth is found throughout the western Sudan, among the peoples of the Niger River and beyond (especially those influenced by the Mande cultures). It involves the evolution of the world from the cosmic egg made by God (this egg may also be likened to an infinitesimal seed of the most ritually important crop). The cosmic egg contains twins, one of which comes out of the egg prematurely (thus making of itself, we may add, an inauthentic elder brother); this would-be creator makes a bad world in which confusion and passion predominate. To regenerate the world, God sacrifices the younger (but authentically elder) twin, creating out of it an elaborately structured but perfectly harmonious order. Humanity must duplicate this order in all things. These religions give prominence to water spirits and center on fishing and agriculture; hunting is viewed negatively. Some of these cultures equate the cosmic egg to the primal word or speech uttered by God, which progressively unfolds through various stages of vibration into this perceptual universe.

It is impossible to ignore the likelihood of influences from Mediterranean cultures in late antiquity and during the Muslim period. These have clearly been reworked with indigenous materials and in an almost anti-gnostical direction, for the leading motive for life appears to be to save the world from chaos, not to save the self from the world (although this, too, appears in certain Bambara and Dogon emphases on the quest for "silence," so as to reappropriate the source from which the primal word emerged).

A massive work by Viviana Pâques, *L'arbre cosmique* (Paris, 1964), has not only given substance to Dieterlen's claim but has also extended it in surprising directions. The myths outlined by Dieterlen are discovered in a multitude of forms extending from the Niger into the Muslim world of North Africa, preserved as a kind of "pagan" mystery in secret black brotherhoods, among those brought as slaves into the Muslim world. In the isolated oases of the Sahara, which have gone through millennia of internal development and gradual cultural blending, these myths are held by nonblack societies as

well, despite Muslim pressures. For example, on the Fezzan oasis, the pre-Muslim Garamantes lived from prehistoric times, slowly absorbing other peoples (including black Africans from the entire Sudanic savanna) while maintaining their own culture; they were also deeply affected by Egyptian influences and, perhaps shared common Saharan motifs with prehistoric Egyptian societies. Their cosmogony was suggested in the sacrifice of a ram divided into forty-eight parts (made up of two halves, each composed of four times six pieces). This sacrifice, enacted at all personal and seasonal rites, commemorated the primordial sacrifice of the ancestral smith and/or serpentine water spirit who brought culture to them. The reason for the multiples of four and six is that four was considered male and three female, and the world is woven of the two together. This myth presented the key to the rhythms of the heavenly bodies, the seasons of the year, clothes, territorial structures, political and social divisions, and much else.

Some Sudanic cultures in northern Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Mali have had the reputation of offering human sacrifices at those crucial times of the year that require enactments of the myth. Virginal girls were preferred, but albinos were also acceptable. The name of the mythic sacrificial victim in southern Tunisia is Israel, suggesting the adaptation of the myth by Berber tribes formerly converted to Judaism. When sacrificed in heaven, Israel, also known as the angel 'Azra'el, is reconstituted in the world below as the sacred community of the Twelve Tribes and also as the plan of the cultivated field. More Muslim versions make Israel into the bush-trickster figure, illustrating again the historical adaptations of what is apparently a fundamental Saharan mythic structure. One of the most striking authentically sub-Saharan expressions of these conceptions is the mythology of the Dogon, to whom I now turn by way of conclusion.

Dogon Mythology. Of all cultures in Africa, it is of the Dogon of Mali that we possess the most voluminous and profound data on mythic themes. In the first years spent among them, Marcel Griaule and his students merely confirmed the impression of earlier observers that the Dogon possessed a rich ritual but only an impoverished mythology. These alleged characteristics of the Dogon were consistent with other descriptions of African cultures made by Europeans. The cult was pragmatic, directed to the clan ancestors *(binu)* and the nature spirits who resided especially in the streams (Nommo). The regional priest who presided over these cults, the *hogon*, was said to be the descendant of the first ancestral chief, Lébé, who led the people to Dogon territory. The *hogon* was, in particular, the high priest to Amma, the su-

preme being, and he had the standing of a chief, governing the region together with the clan elders. In an early work, Germaine Dieterlen related one of the few myths collected: in the beginning Amma dwelt with humans and they served him. When a Muslim refused to get him a drink of water, Amma decided to withdraw to heaven; but because a Dogon rushed to serve him, God revealed the present cult, by which he could be reached through his servant spirits, to the Dogon. (As we know, myths of this sort, recalling the personal fateful encounters with God in the beginning, are perhaps the most universal of African mythic themes and are shared even by hunter-gatherers such as the central African Pygmies.)

In 1947, however, after fifteen years of fieldwork, Griaule was approached by Ogotemmêli, a blind elder of the Dogon, and rewarded for his many years of service to the people by the revelation of a totally unexpected world of myth, a world accessible only to initiated Dogon men. Griaule recorded this revelation in *Conversations with Ogotemmêli* (London, 1965). The symbolic depth, complexity, and length of this mythic narrative evoked irresistible parallels to ancient Egyptian mythology and to Christianity. Griaule discovered, for example, that the Muslim-caused withdrawal of God was merely a childish fable; in fact, Amma created the earth in the beginning, in the form of a woman. He cohabited with her to produce the Nommo, who came forth as bisexual twins. Even today the rain and the "watery copper" rays of the sun are like heaven's semen, generating life throughout the earth. The Nommo, masters of life force and of all wisdom, continue to govern the fertility of the world from their watery residences. Their eight seeds are carried by every human being, shaping sexual procreativity. The first eight ancestors of humanity were produced by the marriage of heaven and earth and nurtured underground by the twin Nommo. However, the first Nommo to be created, Yurugu, had no twin and was not bisexual but male; his frustrated passion for completion (not stopping even at the theft of an "ark," or womb of creation, and incest with Mother Earth) threatened to disorder the whole of God's creation. God therefore exiled him to the bush, where he roams still as a jackal, but, oddly, he remains the patron of divination. To cleanse the earth of the pollution introduced by the jackal trickster, God took the last of the eight Nommo he created and sacrificed him in heaven; his blood fell upon the earth as a sanctifying rain, and cleansed it, permitting life to continue.

The first human, Lébé, reduplicated the cosmic sacrifice here on earth, for he was swallowed and regurgitated by a Nommo serpent being. Lébé thus established the sacred role of chieftaincy and the cultic importance of sacrifice. Everything in human culture mirrors the primal form of Lébé and the dynamic of sacrifice, which through its transformations restores the world to the ideal form of the ark and its Nommo progenitor. The parts of houses, the sections of a family compound, the layout of a village, and the relations within the clan, all mirror the primal male and female. The female twin to the eighth Nommo still regularly visits the *hogon* in the shrine, licking him all over in the dead of night so as to regenerate his sacred energies before returning, in serpentine form, to the river. Everything in life is controlled by twinness, by male and female together. The *hogon* represents the interaction of both of these principles, and that is why he is the chief and high priest. [*See* Dogon Religion.]

Griaule and his students found in these astonishing myths a complete key to Dogon culture, governing even the smallest details of everyday life. However, as it turned out, there are grades of initiation in Dogon cult, and as the years passed Griaule was introduced to deeper and deeper levels. He discovered that the universe did not actually first emerge from the marriage of Heaven and Earth, as so many other African religions held, but that there was an evolution from a cosmic egg or seed, similar to the fonio seed, which is the center of so much of the agricultural ritual of the Dogon. This egg contained four twinned couples, the quintessential elements of creation. The distorted nature of Yurugu was due to his premature attempt to break out of the cosmic egg before his brothers and sisters and to make of the placental egg itself (the universal matrix) his female consort—in short, to rule the universe. To restore the disturbed harmony of the cosmos, God permitted it to be expanded via the ark into this earth. Thus by building houses and villages and plowing their fields on the model of the cosmic egg or ark, humanity regenerates the harmonies of creation. This can only be done through knowledge of the initiatic truths; wisdom and serene insight are necessary to save or sanctify the world properly. This alone is the proper service of God.

In his last, posthumously published, *magnum opus* on Dogon mythology (written with Germaine Dieterlen), *Le renard pâle* (Paris, 1965), Griaule revealed that the cosmic egg was not the deepest secret of creation. Beyond that the wisest Dogon taught the mysteries of the primal word spoken by Amma, from which the entire universe emanated and which the universe reproduces. The egg may be taken as a symbolism of this deeper process. The primordial word or utterance is, in fact, Amma ("God"). It has, when truly spoken, eight syllables or cosmic vibrations, which became the twinned Nommo. All things echo these eight vibrations: there are eight kinds of insects, plants, animals, parts of houses and of human bodies, musical tones and modes,

dialects of the Dogon language, and so on. Language—and consciousness itself—is the pivot of the universe. The wisest Dogon cultivate a meditative silence, attuning themselves to the divine utterance, which continues to be spoken and to generate the universe and all details in it. Yurugu, whose true name is Ogo, whose true animal form is that of the "pale fox" (*not* the jackal)—and who is also linked to the spider—actually serves God in ceaselessly transforming things and introducing change; this brings the universe nearer to perfection. The primal sacrifice of the youngest Nommo is part of the same process. In short, the myths of lower levels of initiation are all taken up again in this most esoteric version and subsumed under it as later, more materialized stages in the cosmic history.

Because the deepest wisdom centers on speech and its vibrations within the cosmic consciousness, Dogon sages developed the essentials of a script. Each of the first eight Nommo vibrations, for example, could be represented by a shape, rather similar in form to the Arabic letters. Dogon elders could show how these flowing shapes branched, diversified, and took material form as all the actual things of this world, stage by stage. In effect, this so called "illiterate" culture had a form of writing. The priests would trace words into the foundations of altars and houses before building any further; the words contained the essence, of which the material things were the less perfect form.

Ironically, the most archaic and universally distributed types of mythic themes are preserved by the Dogon as childish folk tales or exoteric, ad hoc, and topical tales (as in the story of the Muslim and God's withdrawal). Each successive level of esotericism concerns a more recent cultural synthesis. The most esoteric myths evidently represent a response to the challenge of literate civilization, but unlike the topical and episodic response on the exoteric folk level, this response is thoroughly thought through and integrated with the entirety of Dogon culture by its sages. Each challenge is treated as a kind of revelation of deeper metaphysical realities guiding the universe, demanding a whole cultural response instead of a fragmentary one. The Dogon elders have been in the forefront of harmonious and constructive change, contrary to the European view of them as unchanging conservatives. The deep functional and spiritual relevance of myth and worldview could hardly be demonstrated more dramatically than in this process.

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Modern Movements

Over seven thousand new religious movements exist in sub-Saharan Africa. Together they claim more than thirty-two million adherents. These movements have arisen primarily in areas where there has been intensive contact with Christian missionary efforts. However, prophetic and revitalistic movements existed in Africa prior to extensive European contact. Many movements originated as early as the 1880s. The period from 1914 to 1925 marks a second peak in the emergence of new religions in central and southern Africa. However, the groups that are generally referred to as the new religious movements of sub-Saharan Africa are those that have emerged since the early 1930s. Some of these movements actually began earlier but did not gain momentum until that time. Many have persisted in largely the same form that they took fifty years ago. Others have gone underground and resurfaced, often retaining their initial doctrinal and membership requirements.

With reference to doctrinal base, organizational structure, and geographic distribution, three types of new religious movements may be designated: (1) indigenous or independent churches, (2) separatist churches, and (3) neotraditional movements. These groups have taken different forms in central, southern, West and East Africa. They blend elements of African traditional religion with those of the introduced religions, Christianity and Islam. Many of these groups arose in response to the loss of economic, political, and psychological control engendered by colonial domination.

The impetus for the growth of new African religious movements can be traced to five basic factors: (1) The disappointment of local converts with the premises and outcomes of Christianity led to the growth of prophetic, messianic, and millenarian groups. (2) The translation of the Bible into African vernaculars stimulated a reinterpretation of scripture and a spiritual renewal in Christian groups. (3) The perceived divisions in denominational Christianity and its failure to meet local needs influenced the rise of separatist churches and community-based indigenous churches. (4) The weakness of Western medicine in the face of psychological disorders, epidemics, and natural disasters stimulated concern with spiritual healing among new African religious movements. (5) The failure of mission Christianity to break down social and cultural barriers and generate a sense of community led to the strengthening of social ties in small, sectarian groups. In general, the new African churches have tried to create a sense of community and continuity in the new, multiethnic urban environment and in the changing context of the rural village.

Indigenous Churches. Indigenous churches are groups that have been started under the initiative of African leaders outside the immediate context of missions or historic religions. By the 1980s, membership was estimated to comprise nearly 15 percent of the Christian population of sub-Saharan Africa. Also called independent churches, these groups have devised unique forms of social and political organization and have developed their own doctrines. These churches were initially a response to the political and religious situation of colonialism. Groups as diverse as the Harrist church in the Ivory Coast, the Aladura church in Nigeria, the Kimbanguist church in Zaire, and the Apostolic movements of Zimbabwe may be classified as indigenous churches. Nevertheless, each of these churches has a distinctive doctrinal thrust and response to government control. These groups also vary on the organizational level depending on the extent of their local appeal and the demographic and cultural composition of their membership. Indigenous churches may be divided into three specific subtypes: prophetic, messianic, and millenarian. All three sub-types evidence doctrinal innovation, efforts at spiritual renewal, and a reaction against the presence of mission churches.

Prophetic indigenous churches. Prophetic groups are tied to the influence of an individual prophet. They gen-

erally have a strong central organization and an emphasis on healing. One of the most important prophetic churches in central Africa is the Kimbanguist church, which has more than four million adherents in Zaire. Triggered by Simon Kimbangu's initial healing revival in 1921, this movement grew and increased in intensity after its founder's death in 1951. The group has transformed from a prophetic protest movement to an established church and is currently one of the four officially recognized religious bodies in Zaire. The Kimbanguist church was admitted to the World Council of Churches in 1969 and resembles many other prophetic movements that have acquired legitimacy in postindependence Africa. [*See the biography of Kimbangu.*]

Churches with similar origins and leadership structures that focus on a prophetic figure are found in other regions: for example, Alice Lenshina's Lumpa church in Zambia; the Harrist church in Liberia, the Ivory Coast, and Ghana; and the Zionist churches of South Africa. Common to all these movements is an emphasis on spiritual and physical health.

In 1954, the Lumpa church was begun by Alice Lenshina Mulenga in the Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia (present-day Zambia). Lenshina claimed at the time that she had died and come back to life with a religious calling. She was viewed as a visionary prophetess and healer. Like Kimbangu, she attracted many former mission catechists and teachers to her movement. Naming her church Lumpa (the "highest" or the "supreme" in Bemba), Lenshina promised health and a new life to those who forsook traditional magic and witchcraft to follow her. Proclaiming the political and religious autonomy of her followers, Lenshina established a holy village at Kasomo in Northern Rhodesia—a village that became known as the New Zion. Her followers resisted government taxation and political authority; as a result, the cohesiveness of the Lumpa movement was ultimately broken through political struggles. Although Lenshina's church began as an anticolonialist movement, it failed to integrate itself successfully into the new nation-state of Zambia, and in 1970 its followers were expelled from the country. [*See the biography of Lenshina.*]

Toward the end of 1913 a movement of the prophetic type appeared in the Ivory Coast. It was led by William Wade Harris, a Liberian of Grebo origin. Harris claimed that the Angel Gabriel had appeared to him in a vision and instructed him to spread the Christian message as God's prophet. Traveling to the Ivory Coast and the Gold Coast (now Ghana), Harris propagated his message of divine revelation, faith healing, and an improved life for Africans. Although he spent only a short time in the Ivory Coast, the number of his adherents

grew rapidly. Within a few months of the movement's inception Harris had baptized an estimated 120,000 people. After Harris's death in 1929 the prophet John Ahui and the faith healer Albert Atcho continued to expand the Harrist church in the Ivory Coast. Between 1955 and 1961 especially it grew and attracted many former Roman Catholics. In 1973, the Harrist church celebrated its sixtieth anniversary in the Ivory Coast with governmental support and recognition. Like the Kimbanguists, the Harrists have proceeded successfully from a prophetic movement to an official church with national appeal.

Several offshoot movements have developed among Harris's followers: for example, Marie Lalou's Deima movement in the Ivory Coast and the Church of the Twelve Apostles in Ghana. Members of these movements look upon Harris as a founder and prophetic figure. [*See the biography of Harris.*]

The Aladura movement in Nigeria has often been compared with the Harrist church. It is one of several prophetic movements that developed in western Nigeria in the late 1920s in strong reaction against Anglican mission control. These groups emphasized spiritual healing, divine revelation, prophecy, and self-reliance. The term *aladura* ("people of prayer") refers to several related groups, drawn largely from the Yoruba-speaking population, who share certain spiritual characteristics. Like other churches of the prophetic type, these groups acquired local appeal through their emphasis on visionary interpretations of the Bible and through the efforts of various charismatic figures. The Aladura movement continues to grow and has now established branches outside Africa.

Of the approximately three thousand indigenous churches in South Africa, three-quarters are churches that emphasize spiritual healing and the charismatic powers of their leaders. These churches are classified as Zionist because they trace their origins to John Alexander Dowie's Evangelical Christian Catholic Church, which was established in 1896 in Zion City, Illinois. The concept of Zion represents utopian spiritual liberation. Members of these churches place considerable emphasis on divine healing, spiritual revelations, and testimony. Concentrated heavily among the Zulu and Swazi peoples of South Africa, these Zionist churches have diverse doctrinal and ritual formats but are linked by their focus on the prophetic and healing powers of charismatic leaders. Colorful, almost theatrical, ceremonies are typical of these groups. It appears that churches of the Zionist type are clear reactions to the limited avenues for direct political expression in South Africa.

Messianic indigenous churches. Resembling the prophetic movements in their origins, messianic

churches crystallize around a single figure who is regarded as a new messiah. Messianic groups occasionally experience a crisis and a decline in their appeal after the founder dies or disappears. The prophetic message remains closely tied to the leader and his or her charismatic attraction. Movements of this type include the Mai Chaza church and the Apostolic Church of John Masowe in Zimbabwe and the Isaiah Shembe movement in South Africa.

Mai ("mother") Chaza was initially a member of the Methodist church in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). She became seriously ill in 1954 and fell into a coma. Her followers believed her to have died. Upon recovery, Mai Chaza reported that while she was dead she had communicated with God and had received the gift of healing. She sought out the blind, the crippled, and those possessed by alien spirits. Mai Chaza believed that she was a messenger of God and compared herself to Moses and Jesus. To the members of her movement she was both a savior and a miracle worker.

Mai Chaza died in 1960 leaving no heirs. A Malawian adherent called Mapaulos began to perform extraordinary healings in her name. He assumed the title *vamutenga* ("he who is sent from heaven") and continued the mission of healing at Mai Chaza's center, Guta ra Jehovah, or the City of God. After Mai Chaza's death her followers referred to her as Mai Chaza Jesus, the black messiah and savior of Africa. Like Lenshina, Mai Chaza was seen as a chief and medium. The extent to which women have been leaders and founders of prophetic and messianic groups—including the Lumpa church, the Aladura movement, and the Mai Chaza group—is particularly noteworthy. The influence of women in these movements may be viewed as a reaction to the ecclesiastical authority of men in the mission churches.

Several other movements in southern Africa have had similar messianic tendencies. In October 1932 an African prophet calling himself John the Baptist, and otherwise known as Shoniwa or Johane Masowe, began to preach among the Shona people in the Hartley district of Southern Rhodesia. Like Mai Chaza, he claimed to have been resurrected from death and consequently endowed with healing and prophetic powers. Masowe moved from village to village baptizing those who accepted his message of healing and a better life. His movement is often compared to that of John Maranke, another Shona prophet whose African Apostolic church originated at the same time in the Umtali district, drawing converts from the same region. [*See the biography of Maranke.*]

Masowe's movement combined prophetic, messianic, and millenarian elements. He exhorted his followers to abstain from wage labor for the colonial authorities and to resist colonial religious structures and doctrine. A golden age of freedom, opportunity, and self-sufficiency was promised for the future. Masowe's church rejected all Christian sacraments except baptism. As the founder and leader, he reserved for himself the right to baptize all new converts. This ruling resulted in centralization of decision making among the elders and original leaders of the church.

Under political pressure the Apostolic Church of John Masowe, whose members are also known as *vahosanna* (the "hosannas") or as Basketmakers, moved to the Korsten suburb of Port Elizabeth, South Africa, in 1943. Masowe has been referred to as the "secret messiah" because his identity and exact whereabouts were actually unknown to his followers much of the time. After the late 1940s he was seen only sporadically, when he emerged to baptize new converts. Much lore developed around him, and it was rumored several times that he had died and then returned to life. In 1960 his church was expelled from South Africa as a political threat. In the meantime many of his followers had already started to move northward, to Northern and Southern Rhodesia. Masowe actually died (according to news accounts) in Ndola, Zambia, in 1973, leaving behind messianic hopes and a millenarian promise of freedom. The group has not chosen a leader to replace him.

Isaiah Shembe (c. 1870–1935) was a self-proclaimed Zulu prophet who founded the amaNazaretha church in South Africa. A man of compelling personality and significant influence, Shembe was widely known as a holy man and divine healer. He is said to have portrayed himself as a messianic figure, a liberator, and a messenger of God. He established a village, Ekuphakameni, to which his followers flocked for festivals, faith healing, and meditation. After his death, the prophet was succeeded by his son, Johannes Galilee Shembe, or Shembe II, who is believed to have inherited his father's charismatic gifts but not his full messianic status. [*See the biography of Shembe.*]

The messianic movements typified by these three groups center on the personalities and myths of leadership established by their founders. Their doctrinal innovations are rooted in the messages of hope, healing, and possibility offered by their founders. Even after the death of the founders, their messianic traits have been perpetuated as a means of bolstering the faith of the followers and providing a challenge to European missionary efforts.

Many new African religious movements have millenarian tendencies. The Masowe movement, among others, has millenarian elements with a doctrinal emphasis

upon the promised life in a golden age. The message of this group centers on the belief that an age of spiritual and political liberation will come to Africa.

One of the most widespread millenarian movements in sub-Saharan Africa is the Church of the Watchtower, or Kitawala. Linked to the American Jehovah's Witnesses, who began missionary activities in Africa at the beginning of the twentieth century, several Watchtower movements arose across central and southern Africa. Among the best known was the Watchtower group formed by Elliot Kamwana of Nyasaland (modern-day Malawi) in 1908. Since 1910 other groups have formed in eastern Zaire, in Zambia, and in South Africa. All these groups believe in the autonomy of religion apart from political control and hope for a coming spiritual golden age. To a certain extent, the Kitawala movement has influenced the doctrine and beliefs of other indigenous churches. However, the presence of millenarian movements among new African religions should not be exaggerated or viewed as typical. The millenarian alternative is but one type among many rather than a generic form for all new African religions.

Separatist Churches. Separatist groups are those that have broken off from established Christian churches or Islamic congregations. In this sense, separatist churches are distinct from indigenous groups that have never been affiliated with a mission body. They may, nevertheless, also be examined in terms of the prophetic, messianic, and millenarian categories that have been used to classify the indigenous churches. Among separatist groups in the Roman Catholic tradition are the Jamaa, the Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart, and the Legio Maria.

The Jamaa movement was started by a Belgian Franciscan, Placide Tempels. Jamaa ("family" in Swahili) emphasizes the importance of the nuclear family, individuality, personhood, fecundity, and love. Officially, certain Jamaa affiliates have remained within the Roman Catholic church. By 1953, however, Jamaa had developed an independent organizational structure. As the group became more established, it was closely scrutinized by the Catholic authorities and was eventually discouraged and repressed in certain areas. The group continues to operate in the Shaba and Kasai provinces of Zaire.

The Legio Maria, or Legion of Mary, began as an off-shoot of the Irish Roman Catholic lay organization of the same name. Its origin in Kenya dates from 1963. By the early 1970s the group had over ninety thousand members, primarily drawn from the Luo ethnic group. Among the Bemba of Zambia, a similar group, the Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart, broke away from the

established missions in 1955. Each of these separatist movements has emphasized brotherhood, community, and the use of an original form of worship in the local vernacular.

The East African Revival movement, or Balokole ("the Saved Ones"), stands as a primary example of a Protestant separatist church. It began as a charismatic renewal within the Protestant churches of Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika, and Ruanda-Urundi. Initially part of the activities of the former Rwanda Mission, an evangelical branch of the Anglican Church Missionary Society, the revival had become by 1935 a separatist church with indigenous organizational characteristics and worship practices. It has emphasized conversion, testimony, and aggressive proselytizing. Like the Roman Catholic separatist movements, the revival has relied a great deal upon a network of interlocking local groups for its success.

Neotraditional Movements. Other religious movements have maintained the form of traditional cults. They include the secret societies of West Africa within the Poro-Sande complex; reformative cults, such as the Bwiti in Gabon; and newer groups, such as the Église de Dieu de Nos Ancêtres (Church of the God of Our Ancestors) in southwestern Zaire. In each case the neotraditional cults preserve aspects of traditional religion in a new social and cultural context.

Originally formed as a protective warriors' society, the Poro cult initiates young men into adulthood by instructing them in ritual and social obligations. It continues to be an important form of religious, social, and political organization among the Mande-speaking peoples of Sierra Leone, Liberia, and the Ivory Coast. The counterpart society, the Sande or Bundu, prepares women for their social obligations and shares political authority with the Poro society. Although some members of these societies have nominally joined Christian churches, the societies themselves remain outside mission control and make no official attempt to incorporate Christian practices.

In contrast, the Bwiti cult, originating at the turn of the century among the Fang of Gabon, attempted to revitalize a traditional ancestral cult by incorporating rituals and beliefs of neighboring people. At a later date elements of Christian theology and symbolism were added. By the 1950s Bwiti cult leaders had adopted the pattern of the messianic prophetic leadership characteristic of some of the indigenous churches. The group was also known as the Église des Banzie (Church of the Initiates) and had nearly ten thousand Fang members by 1965. In recent years the cult has drawn its membership from dissident Roman Catholic catechists and from

Protestants, incorporating elements of their beliefs into its new doctrines and religious symbols.

The Église de Dieu de Nos Ancêtres, appearing in the 1950s in the Belgian Congo, has followed a similar pattern. This group combines belief in Luba ancestral spirits and traditional religion with elements of Christianity. A sectarian organizational structure, with regular times of meeting and an expanded membership base, has developed. Like the Bwiti cult, the Église de Dieu de Nos Ancêtres has moved away from a small cultic organization to the formal model of a church in response to the pressures of urban migration and cultural change experienced by its members.

The neotraditional cults may be classified along a continuum that extends from the more localized groups to the more assimilated groups (such as the Bwiti) that have reformed and substantially modified aspects of traditional belief and practice. It is important to distinguish churches and cults that include ancestor beliefs from clans and lineages that still venerate ancestors as a continuation of traditional religious practice. In all cases these groups have had to confront the increasing pressures of missionary presence and the influence of Christianity or Islam in their areas of operation.

The Future of the New African Religions. A major debate in the field centers on the extent to which new movements may be considered stable over time. It has been argued that the new religions develop through a process of schism and renewal. They break away from the influence of both mission and newly established churches to develop bonds of family and community that are particularly strong at the local level. Utopian ideals and fundamentalist interpretations of scripture reinforce the initial break and the sense of spiritual renewal in these groups. Schism may be regarded as a sign of doctrinal ambivalence and organizational weakness. At the same time it is the hallmark of spiritual experimentation and renewal. A combination of customary symbols and new values is characteristic of cultural pluralism. Many newer groups stress that their religions form interethnic and transcultural associative networks.

Christianity in Africa has most notably had this pluralizing effect. Although some of the new Christian groups of Africa originate in ethnically homogeneous areas, most emphasize the potential of, and even the necessity for, cultural exchange through overarching symbols and doctrine. This sharing does not mean that an external system is imposed upon or destroys old cultural forms. These processes of cultural combination and reconstruction allow the members of new religious movements to acquire a reflective stance toward their immediate problems and to preserve past cultural

ideas. The types of religious responses vary widely with respect to a group's attitudes toward tradition and to the degree of change considered possible in a particular society. The neotraditional, millenarian, and revitalistic responses resolve social and cultural clashes through blending old and new interpretations of the sacred.

At the same time a question of stable leadership and its institutionalization arises. As the discussion of prophetic and messianic churches emphasizes, the death or demise of a leader creates an important challenge to the viability of a group. Often several branches of an indigenous church or separatist movement exist in a single area because of the inability of leaders to resolve a crisis in leadership succession or to integrate competing doctrinal variations. Thus schism continues to threaten the new religious movements even after they have established autonomy from missions or historic churches. This problem has led some scholars to speculate that the new African religions are unstable and highly mutable and that their appearance merely marks one phase of social or religious protest in the emergence of Africa's new nation-states. Nevertheless, historical evidence suggests that these groups have considerable longevity in spite of their shifting leadership structures and new membership. The persistence of such groups as the Bwiti cult and the Kitawala movement—from the turn of the century—follows this trend.

Another important tendency contributing to the eventual stability of the new religious movements is the shift toward ecumenism. Between 1969 and 1981, several well-established indigenous churches affiliated themselves with the World Council of Churches in an attempt to become international in outlook through an association with worldwide ecumenical movements. They include the Church of the Lord Aladura in Nigeria, the Kimbanguist church in Zaire, the African Israel Nineveh Church in Kenya, and the African Church of the Holy Spirit in Kenya. Other indigenous churches and cults have made efforts to join together in local, national, and all-African cooperative associations that represent them as united political and cultural groups.

Local voluntary associations formed by these churches often attempt to retain the doctrinal autonomy of each group while developing joint fund-raising, educational, and cultural efforts. This type of cooperation is evident in the African Independent Churches' Association, formed in 1965 in South Africa, and in similar ecumenical councils and associations that have formed in central and East Africa. Although such associations do not solve the problem of internal group conflict and leadership succession, they do appear to reinforce cooperation and political stability within the independent church movement as a whole.

Problems concerning coercion and authoritarianism evident in new religious groups in the West such as the People's Temple, Scientology, and the Unification Church are less apparent in recent African movements. In Africa, new members are often attracted by the charismatic appeal of leaders. Membership is so fluid that authoritarian tendencies have little opportunity to develop. However, because the undertones of many religious movements are political, freedom of worship may be limited by the state. For example, a number of movements in central and southern Africa have been placed under restrictions that have led to their eventual prohibition or decline.

Cultural and Social Contribution of Africa's New Religions. Many of Africa's new religious movements, from the 1920s to the present, have started as religions of the oppressed and have become movements of protest. Their protest has often been expressed as a challenge to the authority and liturgy of mission churches. Several of these groups, including the early Watchtower movement inspired by Kamwana in Nyasaland, Kimbanguism in Zaire, and the Harrist church of the Ivory Coast, have also led to or supported movements of political liberation and national independence. The close relationship between political and religious symbols of freedom has contributed to this development.

The social influences of Africa's new religions are not limited to the political sphere. The new images and ideals of community promoted by these groups offer alternative modes of existence to their members and to others who come into contact with the new movements. Through tightly knit communities and internal support structures, Africa's new religions establish claims to loyalty. Culturally they promise a religion that is not alien to the masses. Nevertheless, some of the contemporary groups also emphasize the ultimate attainment of rewards promised in orthodox doctrines. This goal is accomplished through isolation and strict personal adherence to the Bible or the Qur'ān. These literal interpretations of sacred writings serve to develop a new fabric of ideas through which individuals attempt to create alternative types of social relationships. In some instances this return to fundamentalist doctrines within the African context has also had the effect of triggering charismatic renewals and new forms of proselytizing within established mission churches.

The more insulated religious movements still adamantly retain a radical separation from some aspects of the contemporary societies in which they appear. Nevertheless, their attitudes toward work, toward the role of women, and toward new forms of cultural expression, such as discourse and dress, permeate other sectors of social life that are not directly associated with

their religious origins. Religious language and imagery, such as the Jamaa teachings and Apostolic or Zionist sermons and rituals, have now entered common parlance as aspects of urban popular culture. The study of Africa's new religious movements therefore leads to an exploration of new cultural forms.

Because religion involves a high concentration of innovative and restorative symbols, it is a wellspring from which these new expressions are transmitted to a wider society. By means of Africa's new religious movements, conventional cultural and symbolic forms are revived and reinterpreted. Taken from their original source, some of these religious beliefs have been applied to secular life. The ultimate viability of these new religions may, in fact, reside in the capacity of their beliefs and practices to become integrated into the mainstream of modern Africa's social and cultural life. Thus, the greatest impact of these groups may take place through cultural diffusion and sharing rather than through the spread and historical evolution of any particular movement.

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BENNETTA JULES-ROSETTE

History of Study

The classical world had little knowledge of Africa and its peoples, let alone of its religions. With the obvious exceptions of Egypt and, to a limited extent, of the coastal strip facing the Mediterranean, Africa was alleged to be inhabited by fabulous, not wholly human creatures. However, sensible persons among the Greeks and Romans, who were acquainted with such legendary tales, did not take these accounts seriously, as Strabo indicates when he questioned why people should blame Homer for accepting such tales if much later authors had either shown the same ignorance or invented fantastic legends to conceal it, as Hesiod with his Semicanes, Capitones, and Pygmies; Alcman with his Steganopodes; Aeschylus with his Conicipedes; and

countless others. Even reports that are not plainly legendary are of scant use. Herodotus and some later writers, for example, refer to the gods of the Libyans, attributing Greek names to them, but as Stéphane Gsell remarks in his eight-volume *Histoire ancienne de l'Afrique du nord* (Paris, 1913–1928), we cannot be sure whether these gods were true Berber deities or gods introduced to Africa by the Phoenicians.

Though the Romans ruled the whole of northern Africa for centuries, their interest in the local religions seems to have been as slight as that of the Greeks. According to the African-born Latin poet Flavius Cresconius Corippus of the sixth century, the Laguata, a tribe of Tripolitania, adored a god called Gurzil, who was the son of Ammon and a cow and who incarnated himself as a bull. Early twentieth-century commentators would be tempted to interpret isolated examples such as these as traces of zoolatry or possibly of totemism.

In the eleventh century, al-Bakrī likewise mentions a mountain tribe in southern Morocco that allegedly adored a ram. However, neither he nor the other Arab travelers and geographers of the Middle Ages who visited the Maghrib and the Sudan and described their political organization, trade, and customs tell us much about their religion. This may be partly because their contact was restricted mostly to the Muslim rulers and to the upper classes, who, unlike the rural masses, had by then converted to Islam.

The Portuguese discovery of sub-Saharan Africa's coastal regions in the fifteenth century gave Europeans the first opportunity to observe a number of African societies; however, it took a surprisingly long time before any accurate report of their religions reached Europe. The earliest writings that contain some mention of religious matters are by Duarte Pacheco Pereira (1505–1506) and Valentim Fernandes (1506–1507), which seem to refer to the coastal tribes of what are now the Republic of Guinea and Sierra Leone. The following quotation is given by Yves Person in his essay "The Coastal Peoples," included in volume 4 of UNESCO's *General History of Africa*, edited by D. T. Niane (London, 1984):

> The people paid honour to idols carved out of wood; the chief divinity was called Kru; they also practised worship of the dead, who were embalmed before burial. "It is usual to make a memento for all those who die: if he was a notable person, an idol is made resembling him; if he was merely a commoner or a slave, the figure is made of wood and is put in a thatched house. Every year, sacrifices of chickens or goats are made to them."   (Person, in Niane, 1984, p. 307)

In 1483, Portuguese navigator Diogo Cão reached the mouth of the Kongo; by 1491, missionaries had joined

the explorers and mariners. These missionaries were devoted far more to converting the people than to understanding the traditional creeds. The most widely read report on central Africa was Filippo Pigafetta's *Relazione del Reame di Congo* (1591; reprint, Milan, 1978), which was based on the notes of Duarte Lopes, a Portuguese merchant who had lived there for many years before he was appointed an envoy to the pope by the converted Kongo king, Alvaro I. According to this report, the natives of Loango "adore whatever they like, holding the greatest god to be the Sun as male, and the Moon as female; for the rest, every person elects his own Idol, which he adores according to his fancy." Of the Kongo proper an even more improbable picture is drawn: "Everyone worshipped whatever he most fancied without rule or measure or reason at all," and when all the religious relics were collected to be destroyed at the summons of the now-baptized king, Afonso I, it is reported that "there was found a huge quantity of Devils of strange and frightful shape," including "Dragons with wings, Serpents of horrible appearance, Tigers and other most monstrous animals . . . both painted and carved in wood and stone and other material." This is an unlikely collection, judging from what we know of Kongo sculpture.

In 1586, the Portuguese author Santos wrote of another Bantu-speaking ethnic group, the Yao of Mozambique, in less derogatory terms: "They acknowledge a God who, both in this world and in the next, measures the retribution for the good or evil done in this" (cited by Andrew Lang, *The Making of Religion*, London, 1898). This view, however, again does not tally with what we know today of Yao traditional beliefs.

A century later, Giovanni Antonio Cavazzi's *Istorica descrizione de' tre' regni Congo, Matamba Angola* (Bologna, 1687) marks a slight improvement in accuracy, recording in almost correct form the name for the supreme being of certain central African peoples, Nzambi-a-mpungu. His reports, however, retain the derogatory view of his predecessors:

> Before the light of the Holy Gospel dispelled superstition and idolatry from the minds of the Congolese, these unhappy people were subject to the Devil's tyranny. . . . [Apart from Nzambi] there are other gods, inferior to him, but nevertheless worthy of homage; to these too, therefore, cult and adoration are due. . . . The pagans expose a certain quantity of idols, mostly of wood, roughly sculpted, each one of which has its own name.   (my trans.)

An early account of Khoi religion was casually given by the Jesuit priest Gui Tachard in his *Il viaggio di*

Siam de' padri gesuiti mandati dal re di Francia all'Indie, e alla China (Milan, 1693). He writes:

> These people know nothing of the creation of the world, the redemption of mankind, and the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Nevertheless they adore a god, but the cognition they have of him is very confused. They kill in his honor cows and sheep, of which they offer him meat and milk in sign of gratitude toward this deity that grants them, as they believe, now rain and now fair weather, according to their needs.
> (my trans.)

Throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, information on native African religions continued to stagnate at these poor levels. As a consequence of the slow pace of exploration into the African interior, reports focused on the peoples of the coastal western and central areas and on the eastern and northern countries that were permeated, or at least influenced, by Islam. The observers were mostly navigators, explorers, tradesmen, and naturalists who had no ethnological grounding and only a marginal interest in religious matters. Missionaries, who might have been better qualified to investigate the people's beliefs, were usually biased by a general attitude of contempt or pity for the "heathen" and by a deeply rooted ethnocentrism. It should not be forgotten that the first attempts at comparison and synthesis in the framework of the world history of religion, such as were produced in the second half of the nineteenth century, were based largely on information of this kind.

Missionary Reports. In the second half of the nineteenth century, missionaries began to show more care and tolerance in the study of native beliefs. An example of this can be found in the works of the Italian abbot Giovanni Beltrame (*Il Sennaar e lo Sciangallah*, Verona and Padua, 1879; *Il fiume bianco e i Denka*, Verona, 1881), whose attempts to evangelize the tribes of the upper Nile dated back to 1854–1855. Beltrame published, both in the original language and in translation, the splendid chant with which the Dinka celebrate the creative actions of their supreme being known as Dendid, or Dengdit ("great rain"). He also noticed that the Dinka have two verbs, *ciòr* and *lam*, to express the act of praying to God and a separate verb, *vtiég*, used to indicate "to pray to a man." Moreover, he noted that verbs related to God are always used in the present tense. Hence the Christian expression "God has always been and always will be" is rendered "God is and always is"—a grammatical detail with significant theological implications. Of the neighboring Nuer, Beltrame wrote: "They believe in the existence of God, but pay no cult to him" (Beltrame, 1881, pp. 191, 275).

Another example of this new attitude can be found in

Among the Primitive Bakongo (London, 1914) and other works by the English missionary John H. Weeks, who lived for thirty years among the riverine natives of the Kongo and provided a realistic picture of the local religion. He not only recognized the nature of Nzambi as a supreme being but equated this deity with the God of Christianity. He concludes his book with a remarkably modern declaration of method: "In this statement of native beliefs I have tried to reflect the native mind. It would have been possible to have left out ideas here and there, and to have arranged the rest in such a manner that they would have dove-tailed beautifully, but in so doing I should have given my view of the religious beliefs of the natives, not a faithful account of theirs" (Weeks, 1914, p. 288).

An even more authoritative and sophisticated contribution was given a few years later by another Protestant missionary, Henri A. Junod, who lived among the Thonga of coastal Mozambique from 1907 onward. Whereas Weeks had declared in his preface that he had "no particular leaning towards any school of anthropologists," Junod, by the time he collected his earlier materials for publication in 1927, was fully aware of the theoretical discussions in which anthropologists and historians of religion were engaged and was impressed by the fashionable tenets of evolutionism and the requirements of comparativism. Having found among the Thonga the coexistence of beliefs in a sky god and in ancestral spirits, he attempted to assess the respective antiquity of the two apparently conflicting creeds. To do so, he compared these beliefs with others found among southern Bantu-speaking societies. He followed the assertion of W. Challis and Henry Callaway that the sky was prayed to by the forebears of the Swazi and Zulu before the worship of ancestor spirits was introduced. Though Junod called this change "evolution," he realized that this succession was contrary to the schemes of orthodox evolutionism. In an appendix to the 1936 French edition of *The Life of a South African Tribe* (London, 1912), he states that the two sets of creeds could be parallel among the Bantu speakers. At the same time, however, he conjectures, on the basis of psychological considerations, a chronological sequence—naturism, animism, causalism, euhemerism—that partly accepts Nathan Söderblom's hypotheses as stated in his *Das Werden des Gottesglaubens* (Leipzig, 1916). Junod's ambiguous conclusions reflect the case of an experienced researcher trying to combine personally observed realities with the theoretical speculations of others.

Comparative Syntheses: The Quest for Origins. The decades during which missionaries collected most of our information on African religions coincided with the flourishing of a series of ambitious comparative works that attempted to establish the logical, if not chronological, succession of religious ideas in the world. An early prototype of such attempts was Charles de Brosses's *Du culte des dieux fétiches* (Paris, 1760), which compared black African beliefs and rites with those of ancient Egypt. Several of his data and theses were used in Auguste Comte's six-volume *Cours de philosophie positive* (Paris, 1830–1842). The rise of evolutionist theories in the second half of the nineteenth century—a period that saw the intensive exploration of central Africa—encouraged an increasing use of examples from peoples encountered for the first time in addition to those known through previous literature. These examples were often indiscriminately used to represent instances of the stages of "primitive" religion: fetishism, ancestor worship or euhemerism, animism, totemism, idolatry, polytheism, and so on.

These various evolutionary theories were based only in part on artfully selected African materials in order to support the different authors' theses, and their value has been polemical rather than interpretative. They have served to synthesize previously known facts in attractive combinations and to bring them jointly to the broad public's attention. Examples of such comparative syntheses are John Lubbock's *Origin of Civilisation* (London, 1870), Grant Allen's *The Evolution of the Idea of God* (London, 1897), R. R. Marett's *The Threshold of Religion* (London, 1909), and parts of James G. Frazer's immense work.

One of the earliest comprehensive ethnographic surveys is Theodor Waitz's *Anthropologie der Naturvölker* (Leipzig, 1859–1872). In the second of its six volumes, Waitz discusses African blacks and their kin. Drawing from the investigations of field observers, Waitz writes:

> We reach the amazing conclusion that several Negro tribes . . . in the development of their religious conceptions are much further advanced than almost all other savages [*Naturvölker*], so far that, though we do not call them monotheists, we may still think of them as standing on the threshold of monotheism.   (Waitz, 1860, p. 167)

The erudition and wealth of bibliographic information in the two volumes of E. B. Tylor's *Primitive Culture* (London, 1871) were surely not inferior to Waitz's, but in the construction of his impressive theory of animism Tylor overlooks or underrates documents that were not favorable to his thesis. "High above the doctrine of souls, of divine manes, of local nature-spirits, of the great deities of class and element," he writes, "there are to be discerned in savage theology shadowings, quaint

or majestic, of the conception of a Supreme Deity" (Tylor, 1874, vol. 2, p. 332). Tylor's quotations from African literature are extensive, but he was inclined to lump all "savage" peoples together, indiscriminately speaking of the "lower races" and, at one point, of "the rude natives of Siberia and Guinea" (ibid., p. 160).

Other eminent evolutionists, such as Lubbock and Herbert Spencer, included some African tribes in the list of backward societies as surviving examples of primitive atheism or as having no religious ideas whatsoever. This categorization was promptly refuted in Gustav Roskoff's *Das Religionswesen der rohesten Naturvölker* (Leipzig, 1880) and in Albert Réville's *Les religions des peuples non-civilisés* (Paris, 1883). This latter work, which was widely read at the time, deals separately with the peoples of different continents. The author's position represents a compromise, as it were, between the derogatory judgments of the early evolutionists and the gradual rehabilitation of African religious ideas. Réville writes:

> Naturism, the cult of personified natural features, sky, sun, moon, mountains, rivers, etc., is general of African soil. . . . Animism, the worship of spirits detached from nature and without a necessary link with natural phenomena, has taken a preponderant and so to speak absorbing role. Hence the Negro's fetishism, a fetishism that little by little rises to idolatry. . . . Nevertheless one should not omit, I shall not say a trait, but a certain tendency to monotheism, easily emerging from this confused mass of African religions. Undoubtedly, the African native is not insensitive to the idea of a single all-powerful God.   (Réville, 1883, vol. 1, pp. 188–190)

Such admissions, which clearly contradict the widespread evolutionary theories of the time, were largely ignored in academic circles of the English-speaking world until they were systematically assembled in Andrew Lang's *The Making of Religion* (London, 1898; 3d rev. ed., 1909). Lang had been a follower of Tylor and, initially, of his animist theory and was well acquainted with the totemistic theories of John Ferguson McLennan and Frazer. Nevertheless, a review of sources—African no less than Australian, Polynesian, and American—led Lang to conclude that the belief in a supreme being could not have been derived from belief in spirits or totems. Just as Réville had spoken contemptuously of "the incoherence and undisciplined imagination of the Negro," so Lang referred to Africans as belonging to the "low races" and as the "lowest savages." This view did not prevent him, however, from expressing his final opinion of their traditional religion "as probably beginning in a kind of Theism, which is then superseded, in some degree, or even corrupted, by Animism in all its varieties" (Lang, 1909, p. 304).

Lang's assertion of the antiquity of African beliefs in

a high god ran parallel to a similar conviction, within a different scientific milieu, in the emerging notion of *Kulturkreiselehre*, or "doctrine of culture circles." One of the founders of this school of thought, Wilhelm Schmidt, published an early introduction to his monumental work, *Der Ursprung der Gottesidee*, at the same time as the publication of the third edition of Lang's *The Making of Religion;* but almost half a century passed before the twelve-volume work appeared (Münster, 1912–1955). Three volumes are dedicated to the peoples of Africa. Schmidt's much debated thesis of a worldwide primeval monotheism that was corrupted by later trends in successive cultural "cycles" cannot be discussed here. It should be noted, however, that according to Schmidt, the remnants of the world's earliest religious ideas are to be found among African Pygmies, considered to be monotheistic and surviving representatives of the world's most archaic, or "primeval," culture.

Independently of the acceptance or rejection of this theory, Schmidt's presentation of the data marks a striking contrast to that of his predecessors. Rather than arbitrarily assembling data from all sources according to a specific topic, he systematically collected and grouped data in reference to specific ethnic groups. Whenever possible, a summary of information on the geographical and anthropological position of a given tribe is followed by data that are arranged in separate sections devoted to beliefs, myths, sacrifices, prayers, conceptions of the soul, eschatology, ancestor worship, and so on. The materials that were assembled by Schmidt remain to this day an invaluable quarry of carefully sifted and well-ordered information. The arduous field investigation of nomadic forest hunter-gatherers such as the Pygmies, in which Schmidt was particularly interested, also should be credited to his influence. He incessantly encouraged, advised, and sponsored fellow missionaries such as O. Henri Trilles, Peter Schumacher, and especially Paul Schebesta, keeping abreast of their ongoing investigations. The final results of this research were synthesized by Schmidt in 1933 (see Schmidt, 1912–1955, vol. 3) and eventually published in Schebesta's masterly *Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri* (Brussels, 1938–1950), the third volume of which is dedicated entirely to religion, and in Martin Gusinde's *Die Twiden* (Vienna and Stuttgart, 1956), a concise book remarkable for its scientific objectivity and exhaustive bibliography.

Among the relevant works written by this generation of researchers on the general themes of African religion are those devoted to mythology. Alice Werner's *Myths and Legends of the Bantu* appeared in 1933 and was followed, in 1936, by Hermann Baumann's *Schöpfung und*

Urzeit des Menschen im Mythus der afrikanischen Völker, a true masterpiece of erudition by a leading German ethnologist.

Raffaele Pettazzoni, a staunch adversary of Schmidt's theory of primeval monotheism, also made a valid contribution to the study of African religious ideas with his four-volume *Miti e leggende* (Turin, 1948–1963). The first volume remains the fullest and most aptly annotated collection of myths from all parts of Africa. In the work that concluded his long career as a historian of religions, *L'onniscienza di Dio* (Turin, 1955), Pettazzoni devotes the first chapter to sub-Saharan Africa. The book closed the century-long controversy among specialists, documenting from a wholly nonconfessional viewpoint the worldwide distribution of beliefs in a supreme being. Whether originally a lord of the animals or a strictly celestial being—Pettazzoni was skeptical of the possibility of ascertaining origins—the figure of an ancient sky god emerges from Pettazzoni's analysis of African cultures as a being who is untouched by the alien influences of Judaism, Christianity, or Islam.

Tribal Monographs. With the development of colonialism an important new type of literature appeared and spread rapidly: the tribal monograph. Based on the image of the "closed society," this type of book often ignored both cross-cultural comparison and diachronic developments. It described all aspects of a single tribe or ethnic group, starting with geographical distribution, racial characteristics, and linguistic classification and analyzing all facts of its social structure and culture, including religion. The first decades of the twentieth century produced a particularly rich series of such books, which contributed greatly, though often at a superficial level, to the knowledge of countless African religions. The authors were mostly colonial administrators (or district commissioners) and missionaries but also included scientists, such as linguists and anthropologists. The complete series of these works is so long that it defies enumeration. Many of the following, however, have become classics: A. C. Hollis's *The Masai* (Oxford, 1905) and *The Nandi* (Oxford, 1909); Diedrich Westermann's *The Shilluk People* (Berlin, 1912); Günter Tessmann's *Die Pangwe* (Berlin, 1913); Alberto Pollera's *I Baria e i Cunama* (Rome, 1913); Gerhard Lindblom's *The Akamba in British East Africa* (2d ed., Uppsala, 1920); Edwin W. Smith and Andrew Dale's two-volume *The Ila-speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia* (London, 1920); Heinrich Vedder's two-volume *Die Bergdama* (Hamburg, 1923); John Roscoe's *The Baganda* (London, 1911), *The BaKitara or Banyoro* (Cambridge, 1923), and others; and Louis Tauxier's *Le noir du Soudan* (Paris, 1912) and *Religion, mœurs et coutumes des Agnis de la Côte d'Ivoire* (Paris, 1932). During this period, the Bel-

gians, under the direction of Cyrille van Overbergh, planned and, to a large extent, accomplished the publication of a "Collection de Monographies Ethnographiques" (1907–1913), which was intended to cover the whole range of tribes of the Belgian Congo (present-day Zaire).

The scientific merits of these books vary. On principle, and on the positive side, they respect the scientific requirements summarized in Edwin W. Smith's *African Ideas of God: A Symposium* (London, 1950): "Sociologically speaking, African religion is one aspect of African culture. No one element can be exhaustively studied and understood in isolation from the rest" (p. 14). On the other hand, even before that rule was stated, the progress of studies had clearly shown the religions of preliterate peoples to be far too complex to be adequately condensed in a mere chapter of a general monograph. This problem was recognized by experienced authors such as R. S. Rattray, who having published his classic monograph *Ashanti* in 1923, found it necessary to supplement it with *Religion and Art in Ashanti* (Kumasi and London, 1927), and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, author of *The Nuer* (Oxford, 1940), who later devoted a separate volume to *Nuer Religion* (1956).

Before World War II, researchers had been almost exclusively European. The most significant American contribution was Melville J. Herskovits and Frances S. Herskovits's *An Outline of Dahomean Religious Belief* (Menasha, Wis., 1933). Generally, educated Africans had not yet written about or begun to vindicate their own traditional religions. However, in his well-known *Facing Mount Kenya* (London, 1938), with an appreciative but critical preface by Bronislaw Malinowski, Jomo Kenyatta devoted two chapters to the religion of his Kikuyu (or, using Kenyatta's spelling, Gikuyu, or Gekoyo); but, here again, his analysis was only a minor part of an all-embracing monograph. The most significant exception was *The Akan Doctrine of God* (London, 1944) by J. B. Danquah, which is devoted entirely to the exposition of the religious creeds of the writer's own nation, Ashanti. A more appropriate title for the book would be *The Ashanti Doctrine* because Danquah, an Ashanti, was concerned with the creeds, epistemology, and ethics of his own powerful tribe and had little regard for the corresponding, but not identical, systems of other branches of the Akan linguistic family (e.g., Anyi, Baule, Brong, Nzema, etc.). Dense with original quotations, subtle though sometimes odd philological arguments and comparisons, and sophisticated speculation, the book struck a decidedly new note in the concert of previous literature on the subject. It left the reader, however, uncertain as to whether it was a true picture of widespread Ashanti beliefs or the outcome of the au-

thor's personal philosophical and theological reflections.

Anthologies and New Outlooks. In the postwar years a few scholars devised anthologies that arranged side-by-side, condensed accounts of several religions. Well-known examples are *African Ideas of God: A Symposium* (London, 1950), edited by Edwin W. Smith in collaboration with a team of qualified Protestant missionaries, and *Textes sacrés d'Afrique noire* (Paris, 1965), edited by Germaine Dieterlen, which contains a preface by a leading African intellectual, Amadou Hampaté Ba, and a series of essays by lay ethnologists.

The topics examined in these anthologies include cosmology, epistemology, and a general view of the universe, as is the case in *African Worlds* (London, 1954), edited by Daryll Forde, then director of the International African Institute. Forde assembled a series of essays by anthropological authorities such as Mary Douglas on the Lele of Kasai, Günter Wagner on the Abaluyia of Kavirondo, Jacques J. Maquet on Rwanda, Kenneth Little on the Mende of Sierra Leone, and the Ghanaian scholar and politician K. A. Busia on the Ashanti.

Two of the contributors to *African Worlds*, the French ethnologists Marcel Griaule and Germaine Dieterlen, who jointly wrote the essay on the Dogon, deserve special mention on account of the novelty and sophistication of the cosmological and religious systems they were able to investigate and reveal. The team of Africanists led by Griaule, which included Solange de Ganay and Dieterlen, had been conducting intermittent field research for fifteen years among the Dogon of what is now Mali. Dieterlen had produced, among other works, *Les âmes des Dogon* (Paris, 1941), while Griaule had already published his monumental *Masques dogon* (Paris, 1938), in which he examined the religious symbolism of these masks. One day in 1946, Griaule was unexpectedly summoned by a venerable blind sage called Ogotemmêli and, in the course of a month's conversations, obtained from him the revelation of a whole mythological and cosmological system. The complexity of this system far exceeded knowledge of Dogon beliefs that had been previously acquired by the team. The ensuing book, *Dieu d'eau* (Paris, 1948), translated by Robert Redfield as *Conversations with Ogotemmêli* (London, 1965), was received in academic circles with mixed feelings of bewilderment, admiration, and perplexity. Some critics judged that it was inspired by the personal speculations of a single native thinker or, at best, that it was a summary of esoteric teachings that were restricted to a choice minority of the initiated. Griaule had foreseen such doubts and, in the preface to his book, had declared that Ogotemmêli's ontological and cosmological views were understood and shared by most adult Do-

gon, and that the rites connected with them were celebrated by the whole local population. Indeed, apart from verbally assuring me that similar conceptions would prove to be pan-African, he wrote that they would undoubtedly be discovered among the Bambara, Bozo, Kurumba, and other neighbors of the Dogon.

Although Dieterlen's *Essai sur la religion bambara* (Paris, 1951) revealed a comparable wealth of symbols, proclivity to abstractions, and original systematization of the universe among the Bambara, these are by no means identical to the Dogon conceptions. This distinction confirms the general fact that even neighboring tribes that share a similar cultural background and, occasionally, belong to the same ethnolinguistic family have developed and maintained independent, and often markedly different, religious systems. Dieterlen's book is also instructive as an example of a new methodology of investigation that resulted in a striking difference between her account and that published only a generation earlier in Louis Tauxier's *La religion bambara* (Paris, 1927), which was based on field data collected not merely by Tauxier but also by two other experienced Africanists, J. Henry and Charles Monteil. Aware that these discrepancies might cause either the objectivity of the various scholars or the general reliability of native informants to be questioned, Dieterlen benevolently commented on the conscientiousness of her predecessors, if not on the coherence of their reports. She also added that the Bambara distinguish two levels of knowledge, one superficial and the other "deep," in fact, largely esoteric. It is tempting to suggest that these remarks could apply to, and partly explain, the contrasts noted in other cases where the same ethnic unit has been studied by different researchers in succession. Studies of the Kongo and the Akan-Ashanti, briefly mentioned above, are only two examples of what could be a long list.

Knowledge of African religions is also drawn from works devoted to myths, proverbs, oral literature, social and political structures, and most aspects of a people's culture. Among the obvious examples are Adolf Friedrich's *Afrikanische Priestertümer* (Stuttgart, 1939), a useful introduction to the study of priesthood in traditional Africa; Willy Schilde's *Orakel und Gottesurteile in Afrika* (Leipzig, 1940), an exhaustive analysis of divining techniques; Tor Irstam's *The King of Ganda* (Lund, 1944), a comparative study of sacral kingship; and Hans Abrahamsson's *The Origin of Death* (Uppsala, 1951).

The work that most stimulated a reconsideration of African creeds in the postwar years was *La philosophie bantoue* (Elisabethville, Belgian Congo, 1945), written by a Belgian Franciscan friar, Placide Tempels. This book is not merely a synthesis of religious beliefs and

rites; it also discusses criteriology, ontology, "wisdom," metaphysics, psychology, jurisprudence, and ethics. It stresses that in all these realms, the universe is seen as a system of "vital forces," originating in God and radiating to spirits, human beings, animals, plants, and even minerals. These forces can be benign or hostile, strengthened or weakened, as they incessantly influence one another. The idea of the cosmos as a hierarchy of forces was surely not new. What was new was that Tempels seems to have derived this system from his missionary experiences and from conversations with the Luba rather than from sociological or philosophical literature. He quotes no literature throughout the book, with the one exception of Diedrich Westermann's *Der Afrikaner heute und morgen* (Essen, 1934), in which he was surprised to find the fundamental principles of his own theory. Furthermore, Tempels felt sure that these concepts were shared by all Bantu-speaking peoples. Indeed, in the introduction to the French edition, he quoted several unnamed experienced colonialists who had assured him "that he had written nothing new, but rather established order in the imprecise bulk of their own ascertainments based on their practical knowledge of the black man." He also reported the following message received from Herskovits: "I am interested that so many of the ideas Father Tempels exposes from the Belgian Congo are so close to those that I have found among the Sudanese peoples of the Guinea coast area" (Tempels, 1949, p. 25). Herskovits's opinion reopens a general and, so far, unsolved question: to what extent are worldviews and fundamental religious ideas common to the black peoples of the whole continent or original and characteristic of single tribal traditions?

New Developments. With the collapse of the colonial system tribal monographs have dwindled and have been replaced tendentially by anthropological monographs and articles that analyze religious beliefs and practices within the broader framework of whole sociocultural systems. In *Theories of Primitive Religion* (Oxford, 1965), Evans-Pritchard writes: "These recent researches in particular societies bring us nearer to the formulation of the problem of what is the part played by religion, and in general by what might be called nonscientific thought, in social life" (p. 113). In cases such as John Middleton's *Lugbara Religion* (London, 1960) and Godfrey Lienhardt's work on the Dinka, *Divinity and Experience* (Oxford, 1961), religion is the central topic; in others, such as Antonio Jorge Dias and Margot Dias's four-volume *Os Macondes de Moçambique* (Lisbon, 1964–1970), it is dealt with only peripherally. In my *Una società guineana: Gli Nzema* (Turin, 1977–1978), a two-volume work, I discuss the Nzema of Ghana, the southernmost branch of the Akan group, who, in spite of nominal conversion to Christianity, have remained staunchly faithful to their traditional "fetishist" beliefs and cults, and I analyze through microbiographical accounts the impact of religion on everyday life.

As the general trend of scientific interests shifted from an abstract theological to a positive social and psychological context, attempts to make worldwide comparisons of religions and to ascertain the relative age of religious conceptions have gradually been abandoned, while detailed studies of specific traits, symbols, and rites are becoming more frequent. One subject, divination, has retained the attention of field anthropologists. Victor Turner's *Ndembu Divination: Its Symbolism and Techniques* (Manchester, 1961) and William R. Bascom's *Ifa Divination* (Bloomington, Ind., 1969), which examines the Yoruba of Nigeria, are the most valuable contributions in this area since Schilde's work. New knowledge has also been acquired concerning the notion of sacrifice, which is the subject of five consecutive issues of the series "Systèmes de pensée en Afrique noire" (1976–1983), published by the École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris.

By far the most numerous and popular, though not scientifically faultless, sidelights illuminating African religions come from the domain of art history. A growing number of studies on the symbolic meaning and ceremonial use of masks, figurines, and other ritual accessories are shedding an indirect light on vital aspects of African mythology and religious rites, particularly those of West and central Africa. Dominique Zahan's *Antilopes du soleil* (Vienna, 1980), on antelope figures in the sculpture of western Sudanese peoples, is one of the finest among such books. More generally, the fifteen-volume Italian *Enciclopedia universale dell'arte* (Rome, 1958–1967; translated as *Encyclopedia of World Art*, New York, 1959–1983) devotes constant attention to the visual aspects of African religions. [*See* Iconography, *article on* Traditional African Iconography.]

Not only the traditional systems of creeds but also the syncretic, pseudo-Christian, and prophetic movements that continue to attract millions of Africans have been studied with growing attention by both missionaries and anthropologists. An impressive example of these studies is Valeer Neckebrouck's *Le peuple affligé* (Immensee, Switzerland, 1973), which includes a discussion of these movements in Kenya and neighboring countries.

The many books and articles devoted to the religions of single tribes, with their great wealth of details and depth of analysis, have made summaries of the subject a difficult task. The most popular syntheses remain Geoffrey Parrinder's *West African Religion* (London, 1949) and *African Traditional Religion* (London, 1954).

In the postwar years, native Africans themselves have written similar surveys, such as E. Bọlaji Idowu's *African Traditional Religion* (London, 1973) and John S. Mbiti's *African Religions and Philosophy* (New York, 1969) and *Introduction to African Religion* (London, 1975). These contributions are more valuable when restricted to the religion of the writer's own nation, such as *The Religion of the Yorubas* by J. Olumide Lucas (London, 1948). The African scholar Alexis Kagame has pursued the critical reexamination of what Tempels had termed "Bantu philosophy," displaying a wealth of references and a soundness of method that makes his work, *La philosophie bantu comparée* (Paris, 1976), not only far superior to that of his predecessor but also a stimulating encouragement to further studies in this inexhaustible field.

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VINIGI GROTTANELLI

AFRO-AMERICAN RELIGIONS. [*This entry, which consists of two articles, examines the religious traditions—both native and adopted—of North Americans of African descent. The first article,* An Overview, *presents a historical survey of black religions from the arrival of African slaves in British North America during the seventeenth century up through the civil rights and liberation theology movements of recent decades. The second article,* Muslim Movements, *details the growing role Islam plays in the religious life of black North Americans. For treatments of the religious traditions of people of the African diaspora elsewhere in the Americas, see* Afro-Brazilian Cults; Afro-Surinamese Religions; Caribbean Religions, *article on* Afro-Caribbean Religions; Santería; *and* Voodoo.]

An Overview

The beginnings of black religions in North America lie in Africa. The religious traditions of West Africa and central Africa were transmitted by slaves in the New World to their descendants, but they were also transformed by the exigencies of slavery.

The Legacy from Africa. Separated from kin, culture, and nation, African slaves of diverse origin could not recreate their religions in North America, but they did retain the fundamental perspectives and worldviews symbolized in their religions, even as they adopted religious traditions from Europeans, Native Americans, and other Africans and combined them in new, "creole" religions. In certain countries (e.g., Haiti, Cuba, and Brazil) the African character of black religious life is still obvious. Such religions as Haitian Voodoo, Cuban Santería, and Brazilian Candomblé attest to the continuity of African theologies and African rituals in the midst of change.

In contrast, the influence of Africa upon black religions in North America is more subtle and more difficult to observe. Two major factors help account for this divergence in Afro-American cultures: the differences between Roman Catholic piety and Protestant piety and the differences between patterns of slave distribution in colonial America. In Roman Catholic colonies, like Haiti, Cuba, and Brazil, the cult of the saints provided slaves with a convenient structure to both cover and support their worship of the gods of Africa. In British North America this support was lacking, because Protestants condemned the veneration of saints as idolatry. Moreover, a relatively small number of Africans were imported into North America, and their numbers were quickly surpassed by the growth of slaves born in the New World with no firsthand knowledge of Africa. By contrast, in the Caribbean and in Brazil a steady influx of large numbers of Africans renewed the influence of African customs and beliefs. While slaves in North America were dispersed among a large white population, those in Latin America were generally concentrated in numbers that far outdistanced the white population. As a result, with few exceptions, cultural contact and concomitant pressures to acculturate were more intense in the United States than elsewhere in the hemisphere.

The influence of African religions, then, was more pervasive and institutionalized in Latin America than in the United States, but African religious traditions were alive in the United States as well. Slaves in the American South reinterpreted Christian rituals, such as baptism, in terms of African initiation rites. They marched around their prayer houses counterclockwise in religious dances whose steps closely resembled those performed in Africa in honor of the gods; they emphasized possession by the spirit of the Christian God, just as Africans stressed possession by the gods; and they decorated graves in a manner that strongly suggested the funeral customs of the peoples of the Kongo. The song styles and magical-medicinal practice of North American slaves also derived from Africa, as did naming practices, folk tales, and a host of other cultural customs that continued alongside Christianity.

The Colonial Period to the Civil War. In British North America during the colonial period, efforts to convert the slaves to Christianity did not begin until the eighteenth century and did not prove effective until the 1740s. During that decade, a series of religious revivals led significant numbers of slaves to accept Christianity. Many more would convert during the revivals at the turn of the century. Revivalistic Christianity appealed to slaves for several reasons. It encouraged ecstatic religious behavior, which was consonant with the African religious heritage of the slaves; it emphasized the experience of conversion instead of catechetical indoctrination, and so made it easier for illiterate slaves to appropriate Christianity; it allowed the uneducated and the poorer classes, including slaves, to pray and even preach in public; and it inspired some whites to advocate the abolition of slavery.

As early as the 1770s, early black preachers in the South gathered independent congregations and organized them into churches. Because of their policy of congregational independence, the Baptists took the lead in founding separate black churches. Despite occasional proscription and frequent harassment, black Baptist churches grew in size and number during the antebellum period in the South, surpassing in size the white churches in several state associations. Though nominally under white control, many of these congregations were in fact pastored by black ministers. In the North, independent black churches began in the late eighteenth century. Led by Richard Allen (1760–1831), a former slave, the first black Methodist church was formed in 1794 in Philadelphia. After a protracted struggle with white Methodists over control of the church, Allen's congregation united with several other black Methodist churches in 1816 to form a black denomination, known as the African Methodist Episcopal Church. During the first decades of the nineteenth century, black Episcopalians, black Presbyterians, and black Baptists also founded separate churches in the North. Although black Catholics were unable to duplicate the leadership of the black Protestant minister and the independence of the black Protestant church, communities of black Catholics in Baltimore and New Orleans did organize two orders of black women during this period, the Oblate Sisters of Providence in 1829 and the Holy Family Sisters in 1842. The formation of separate black religious institutions was an important step in the organization of the free black communities in the North, because the churches came to function as the primary forums for black leaders, frequently the ministers themselves, to address issues confronting black Americans in the nineteenth century, such as colonization and antislavery.

The issue of African colonization. The repatriation of free blacks to Africa was proposed as a solution to the race problem in North America by some of the most eminent white leaders in the nineteenth century. In 1816 the American Colonization Society was founded to support this cause. Though they did not oppose voluntary emigration, black ministers and churches feared that the Colonization Society would lead to forced emigration of free blacks in order to silence their opposition to slavery. Black clergymen and laity protested colonization in sermons, speeches, and pamphlets, which asserted blacks' American identity and attacked the notion that blacks could achieve freedom only in another land. About the same time, the first efforts of Afro-American missionaries to Africa were initiated by Daniel Coker in 1820 and Lott Carey in 1821.

Abolition and other social causes. The abolition of slavery was the second great issue with which the Northern black churches and clergy grappled. The most radical attacks against slavery, like those of David Walker (1785–1830) and Henry Highland Garnet (1815–1882), were couched in religious apocalyptic language. In these and other polemics, Afro-Americans began to articulate in print their theological reflections upon their history in North America. Many of the leading black abolitionists were ministers. Besides antislavery movements, they were usually involved in the major social causes of the antebellum period: temperance, moral reform, and women's rights. They also participated in the National Negro Convention movement, an attempt to organize blacks nationally to meet the problems of racism, especially discriminatory legislation, which increasingly threatened free black communities. The first of these national conventions met in Richard Allen's Bethel Church in Philadelphia in 1830, with Allen sitting as president and convener, an illustration of the importance of the black churches in the political and social life of Afro-Americans.

Religion under slavery. In the South, Christianity gradually reached more and more slaves during the decades immediately preceding the Civil War. Some slaves attended church with whites, while others, mainly those in urban areas, belonged to separate black churches. Many held their own prayer meetings on the plantations and small farms of the South. Sometimes these prayer meetings were attended by whites; others were held in secret at risk of severe punishment. Though blacks and whites mutually influenced religious life under slavery, the slaves developed their own version of Christianity, in which they condemned slavery and defended their own humanity against slavery's brutalizing power. For slaves, the personal experience of conversion was a source of self-worth, as they learned

that they were chosen by God in the midst of the dehumanizing condition of slavery. As a people, slaves identified themselves with biblical Israel and predicted that God would free them as he had freed the Israelites of old from bondage in Egypt. In intensely emotional prayer services, the slaves reinforced their vision of Christianity in sermon, prayer, and song.

Emancipation and Reconstruction. During the Civil War, Northern missionaries, both white and black, journeyed to the South to educate the former slaves and to make them church members. In several instances, the black missionaries returning south were former slaves or free blacks who had fled to the North during the slavery period. Along with material assistance, the missionaries brought schools, to which the former slaves flocked in large numbers. Many of the black colleges of today, including Fisk, Dillard, Hampton, Tuskegee, and Tougaloo, have their origins in the work of freedmen's aid societies sponsored by churches during Reconstruction. For a short time, at least, Reconstruction gave black Southerners access to political power. Black ministers, such as Hiram Revels (1822–1901) and Richard Harvey Cain (1825–1887), served in state governments during Reconstruction and even won office on the national level. From 1865 to 1877, black ministers helped to organize political parties, establish newspapers, and found churches.

With emancipation, former slaves swarmed out of white churches to found their own churches. Black members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South withdrew to found their own Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in 1870. Black Baptists united to form all-black associations and state conventions, eventually leading through several permutations to the formation of the largest black denomination, the National Baptist Convention, in 1896. Meanwhile, black Methodists from the North also included former slaves on their rolls, swelling their churches to sizes larger than ever. Tension between Northern black missionaries, many of them educated, and Southern black preachers, many of them illiterate, reflected the larger tension between the more sedate and moralistic religion of the educated and the emotional religion of the illiterate folk. In the midst of the failure of Reconstruction, the black church, usually small, poor, and rural, was a source of continuity with the culture of the slaves. As the distance from slavery widened, the church remained a force of conservatism as well as a source of adaptation to new and different circumstances.

Transition: Post-Reconstruction to World War I. The period from the end of Reconstruction in 1877 to World War I was a period of tremendous transition for Afro-Americans. It was a period of the rise of white terror-ism, Jim Crow laws, and the beginning of the "great migration" of rural blacks to cities in the South and North. The response of blacks to virulent racism, segregation, and urbanization was largely formulated through the churches, though increasingly voices other than those of the ministers were heard. New generations would tend to move away from the culture of slavery, while at the same time intellectuals and artists would celebrate the spirit of the "old-time religion."

Against the backdrop of worsening oppression in the last decades of the nineteenth century, black clergy and laity reflected theologically upon the meaning of black suffering in America. Some depicted black Americans as "suffering servants," destined to save American Christianity from the racism, militarism, and nationalism of the times. Some predicted that American civilization would soon come to an end and that the task of civilizing and christianizing the world would be taken up by the darker-skinned races, who would not just preach Christianity but would put it into practice. Still others combated racism by appealing to the glorious historical past of Africa. In their view of history, God had allowed Africans to be enslaved so that Afro-Americans could someday return to redeem pagan Africa and so restore African civilization to its former glory among the nations of the world.

During this period, African colonization seemed more attractive as a solution to the racism surrounding Afro-Americans. According to Bishop Henry McNeal Turner (1834–1915) of the African Methodist Episcopal church, only in Africa could black Americans assert their full rights. Moreover, according to the black Episcopalian Alexander Crummell (1819–1898), it was their destiny to convert Africa. For those Afro-Americans who turned to colonization in this period, the idea of settling in Africa took on a new spirit of black pride. Nowhere was this more clearly stated than in the words of Bishop Turner, who spoke of the necessity of a black God for black people. Interest in African colonization was also spread in the United States by Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832–1912), a Presbyterian minister and a minister for the state of Liberia, who spoke widely on Africa.

Africa as an idea, a symbol of the destiny of Afro-Americans, was more powerful than it was as an actual field for Afro-American missionary activity. Black churches simply did not have the resources to mount large-scale foreign missions. However, black American missionaries did go to Africa, some of them under the auspices of white denominations. In some cases the churches they helped found had important influences upon the political and national organization of African peoples. Despite the difficulties of the period, few Afro-Americans immigrated to Africa. They did migrate on a

large scale within the United States, however—northward, westward, and especially from the country to the city.

Afro-Americans in an Urban Setting. During the twentieth century, urbanization had a tremendous impact upon black culture and religion. From the familiar rural setting, with its social intimacy and traditional values, a basically peasant people was transplanted into the unfamiliar surroundings of anonymous, impersonal, urban America. Crowded into ghettos in a hostile and foreign environment, black migrants sought security in the church.

But the church too had changed. The small rural chapel in which they had known status and identity gave way to the larger church edifices of the city, where they were unknown and perhaps unappreciated. Under the guidance of socially concerned ministers, some of the larger city churches developed elaborate social programs to help the migrants and other residents of the growing ghettos. The migrants themselves attempted to re-create the closeness of the small rural church by establishing new churches, usually in homes or rented storefronts. The house church and storefront church became familiar sites in urban black communities. In these new church structures, a new religious movement, Holiness-Pentecostalism, took root, though it was in fact a return to the emotionalism and ecstasy of the old-time religion that had waned in many Baptist and Methodist churches. One of the founders of Pentecostalism in the United States was W. J. Seymour, a black minister who presided over the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles in 1906. The modern Pentecostal movement traces its origin from this revival. The Holiness-Pentecostal tradition reemphasized the experiential dimension of Protestantism, laying heavy stress upon healing, prophecy, and speaking in tongues. This tradition also made an important contribution to Afro-American music by incorporating such "secular" instruments as guitars, drums, and pianos into sacred music, thus facilitating the unique style of the black musical genre known as "gospel music."

In addition to the Holiness-Pentecostal movement, several other new religious options began to attract urban black people in the first decades of the twentieth century. The variety of city life opened horizons that had been relatively closed in rural areas. Secularism loomed larger, as did a whole host of new religions and unusual messiahs. Against the background of urbanization, a significant number of small black churches and religious communities developed around the charismatic personalities of nontraditional religious leaders. Representing in part the disenchantment of blacks with American Christianity, several of these new groups con-

flated race and religion by offering blacks a new religio-national identity. Urbanization also brought more black people than ever before into contact with Roman Catholicism. Through the mechanism of the parochial school, American blacks came to convert to Roman Catholicism for the first time in large numbers.

The urban setting and the continuing problem of racism fostered the development of new religious forms in the urban black community. Islam and Judaism seemed viable religious choices for blacks convinced of the inveterate racism of white Christians. Black Jews (of various types) and the Moorish Science Temple founded by Timothy Drew (also known as Noble Drew Ali, 1886–1929) offered Afro-Americans a new identity. No longer were Afro-Americans called "Negroes": they were the "true Jews" or, alternately, "Moors." Their "natural" religion was not Christianity but Judaism or Islam, as interpreted by Drew and various black "rabbis." In these esoteric forms of Judaism and Islam, some black Americans found a mythical past that contradicted the racial stereotypes of the day. Others sought religious solace in the personality cults of Father Divine (George Baker, 1877–1965) and Bishop Emmanuel "Daddy" Grace (1881–1960). Tired of deferring hope until an afterlife, the disciples of these black "gods" sought tangible salvation from sickness and poverty; Father Divine, Daddy Grace, and others were trusted by many blacks to heal their material, as well as spiritual, ills.

The most popular movement, however, was that of Marcus Garvey (1887–1940), a West Indian black whose Universal Negro Improvement Association (founded in 1914) united interest in Africa as a black Zion with the assertion of black racial pride. The association was itself a quasi-religious organization, with its own hymns, sermons, catechism, and baptismal service. At the same time, it enlisted widespread support among black ministers of various denominations.

One solution to the apparent conflict between Christian doctrine and the racist behavior of white American Christians was to abandon Christianity as a religion for whites and to develop another religion for blacks. The most consistent form of this conflation of racial and religious identities was the Nation of Islam, founded in Detroit in the 1930s by Wallace D. Fard (1877?–1934?) and led, after Fard's retirement, by Elijah Muhammad. The Black Muslims, as they came to be called, taught that black people were the original human beings and that whites were devils created by a wicked scientist named Yakub. Incredible as this myth might be if taken literally, its symbolic power appealed to significant numbers of black people, as did the discipline of the Nation's moral teaching, which helped blacks to order and rationalize daily life.

At the opposite pole from the Black Muslims were those blacks in white churches who saw their religion as a force that transcended race. For example, black Roman Catholics saw themselves as belonging to a universal, cosmopolitan church that transcended national and ethnic boundaries. As the number of black converts to Roman Catholicism grew in the cities, so did the number of parish churches founded to minister to their needs. The number of black priests, however, lagged far behind, as very few black Americans were ordained to the priesthood in the Roman Catholic church.

The immigration of West Indian blacks to the United States brought to the urban communities of the East the religions of Voodoo and Santería. Combining religion, medicine, and magic in coherent systems of belief and ritual, these Caribbean religions continued the age-old veneration of the ancestral gods of Africa in twentieth-century America wherever Cuban, Haitian, or Puerto Rican communities were found.

Civil Rights and Black Power. As the movement for civil rights grew in the 1950s and 1960s, the black churches as the historic centers of social and political organization within the black community assumed leadership. But the involvement of particular congregations or individual ministers did not exhaust the participation of black religion in the movement. For many blacks, the movement itself was a religious movement, and they consciously drew upon the spiritual resonance of hymns, sermons, and biblical imagery to move the conscience of the nation. The classic example of the religious dimension of the civil rights struggle was the leadership of Baptist minister Martin Luther King, Jr. King's career and, in a different way, that of Malcolm X (Malcolm Little, 1925–1965), demonstrated the religious nature of the struggle for equality.

In the 1960s and 1970s the black churches came in for harsh criticism from black militants who saw Christianity as incompatible with "black power." One attempt to answer the militant challenge was the effort of several black clergymen to construct a black theology in conversation with liberation theology and Marxism from the Third World. Despite criticism, religion remains a powerful, culture-shaping force in American black communities.

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ALBERT J. RABOTEAU

Muslim Movements

The organization of Afro-Americans into movements that identified themselves as Muslim began in 1913, but the history of Islam among black Americans is much older. Indeed, the case has been made that black Muslims, "Moors" in the company of Spanish explorers, were the first to introduce Islam to America. Muslims from islamized areas of Africa were enslaved in British North America, and a few left narratives of their experiences. Several of these, written in Arabic, are still extant. Missionaries remarked that Muslim slaves in an-

tebellum Georgia and South Carolina blended Islam and Christianity by identifying God with Allāh and Jesus with Muḥammad. In the 1930s descendants of these slaves still remembered how their grandparents used to pray five times daily, facing east toward Mecca. Islam was not widespread, however, among slaves in the United States, the vast majority of whom followed the traditional religions of Africa and adopted some form of Christianity.

Muslim emigration from the Middle East in the nineteenth century did not lead to extensive contact, much less religious proselytizing, between Arab Muslims and Afro-Americans. The potential appeal of Islam for black Americans was enunciated most effectively by Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832–1912), minister for the government of Liberia, who lectured widely in the United States. In his book, *Christianity, Islam, and the Negro Race* (1888) Blyden compared the racial attitudes of Christian and Muslim missionaries in Africa and came to the conclusion that Islam had a much better record of racial equality than did Christianity.

Moorish Science. In the late nineteenth century, black intellectuals became increasingly critical of white Christians for supporting racial segregation in America and colonialism in Africa. Europeans and Americans, they charged, were in danger of turning Christianity into a "white man's religion." After the turn of the century, Timothy Drew (1886–1929), a black delivery man from North Carolina, began teaching that Christianity was a religion for whites. The true religion of black people, he announced, was Islam. In 1913, the Noble Drew Ali, as his followers called him, founded the first Moorish Science Temple in Newark, New Jersey. Knowledge of self was the key to salvation, according to Ali, and he claimed that he had been sent by Allah to restore to Afro-Americans the knowledge of their true identity, stolen from them by Christian Europeans. Afro-Americans were not Negroes; they were "Asiatics." Their original home was Morocco and their true identity was Moorish-American. Possessed of their own identity and their own religion, Moorish-Americans were empowered to overcome racial and economic oppression. The doctrines of Moorish Science were explained in *The Holy Koran*, a sixty-page booklet that bore no resemblance to the Qur'ān of Islam. By 1925, Ali had founded several temples and moved his headquarters to Chicago. There he died under mysterious circumstances in 1929. His movement split into several factions, but it survived, as various groups claimed allegiance to several rivals who claimed to be "reincarnations" of Noble Drew Ali. Though heretical in the view of orthodox Muslims, the Moorish Science Temple was the first organization to spread awareness of Islam as an alternative to Christianity among black Americans.

The first missionaries of worldwide Islam to attempt to convert Afro-Americans came from the Ahmadīyah movement which originated in India in 1889. The Ahmadīyah, who regarded their founder, Mizra Ghulam Ahmad, as a reformer of Islam, sent their first missionary to the United States in 1920. During the next decade a significant proportion of his converts were black. The Ahmadīyah influence was far exceeded, however, by a second indigenous group of black Muslims, known as the Nation of Islam.

Nation of Islam. In 1930, a peddler named Wallace D. Fard (later known as Walli Farrad, Professor Ford, Farrad Mohammed, and numerous other aliases) appeared in the black community of Detroit. Fard claimed that he had come from Mecca to reveal to black Americans their true identity as Muslims of the "lost-found tribe of Shabbazz." Like the Noble Drew Ali, Fard taught that salvation for black people lay in self-knowledge. Within a few years, he organized a Temple of Islam, a "university" (actually an elementary and secondary school), a Muslim girls' training class, and a paramilitary group, the Fruit of Islam. In 1934, Fard disappeared as mysteriously as he had come. The leadership of the Nation of Islam was taken up by Fard's chief minister, Elijah Poole (1897–1975), a black laborer from Georgia, whom Fard had renamed Elijah Muhammad.

Elijah Muhammad announced to the members of the Nation that Wallace D. Fard was actually the incarnation of Allah and that he, Elijah, was his messenger. For the next forty years, he was regarded as such by his followers, who came to be known as the Black Muslims. According to the teachings of Messenger Muhammad, as he was called, humankind was originally black, until an evil scientist created a race of white people through genetic engineering. The whites he created turned out to be devils. Their religion is Christianity, while that of the original black people is Islam. Allah has allowed the race of white devils to rule the world for six thousand years, a period about to end with the destruction of the world, after which a new world will be ruled by a nation of righteous blacks. Instead of striving for integration, then, blacks should separate themselves from white society which is corrupt and doomed.

Elijah Muhammad elaborated a detailed program for the Nation that included establishing Black Muslim businesses in order to achieve economic independence and demanding that the federal government set aside separate land for Afro-Americans in reparation for slavery. Black Muslims refused to vote, to participate in the armed services, or to salute the flag. The separate identity of members of the Nation of Islam was reinforced

by a strict ethical code. Alcohol, drugs, tobacco, sports, movies, and cosmetics were forbidden, along with pork and other foods identified as unclean or unhealthy.

In the 1950s, Malcolm Little (1925–1965), who had converted to the Nation of Islam in prison, rose to prominence as chief spokesman for Elijah Muhammad. As Malcolm X he became one of the most articulate critics of racial injustice in the country during the civil rights period. Rejecting the nonviolent approach of Martin Luther King, Jr., he argued that separatism and self-determination were necessary if blacks were to achieve full equality. During his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1964, however, he observed the racial cosmopolitanism of Islam and concluded that the doctrine of the Nation of Islam was incompatible with his new understanding of the religion. Breaking with Elijah Muhammad, he founded his own organization, the Muslim Mosque, Inc., in New York City. Shortly thereafter, he was assassinated. The life and death of Malcolm X helped to increase interest in Islam among black Americans.

In 1975, Elijah Muhammad died, and his son Warithuddin (Wallace Deen) Muhammad succeeded to the leadership of the Nation of Islam. Rapidly, he began to move the members of the Nation of Islam toward embracing orthodox Islam. He explained that the teachings of Wallace D. Fard and his father were to be understood allegorically, not literally. He opened the Nation of Islam to white membership and encouraged his followers to participate in the civic and political life of the country. These radical changes were symbolized by changes in name, as the Nation of Islam became the World Community of Islam in the West and then the American Muslim Mission. This last name signified the close connection that Imam Warithuddin Muhammad sought to develop between Afro-American Muslims and the worldwide community of Islam. These changes were rejected by some Black Muslims. Under the leadership of Minister Louis Farrakhan, this faction has broken with the American Muslim Mission, returned to the original teachings and ideals of Elijah Muhammad, and readopted the old name, the Nation of Islam.

Although the Moorish Science Temple and the Nation of Islam have excited the most interest in the popular and the scholarly press, increasing numbers of black Americans have converted to Islam in the twentieth century without having gone through the channels of these heterodox movements, as orthodox Muslim societies and associations have placed them in direct contact with the Qur'ān and with the history of Muslim culture and spirituality.

[*See also the biographies of Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X.*]

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AFRO-BRAZILIAN CULTS. The origin of the present-day mediumistic religions of Brazil can be traced to the arrival there of African slaves in the sixteenth century. But these Afro-Brazilian cults did not begin to flourish in their present form until the mid-nineteenth century.

The first accounts of these cults describe small communities called Candomblé (in Salvador, state of Bahia, in the northeast) and Macumba (in Rio, state of Rio de Janeiro, in the southeast). These communities, which were made up of African blacks and their descendants, were guided by religious leaders called *pais de santo* and *maēs de santo* ("fathers of the saints" and "mothers of the saints"). Descriptions of such cults in other regions are more recent and include the cults called Xangô (in Recife, state of Pernambuco, in the northeast); Tambor de Mina and Nagô (in the state of Maranhão, in the northeast); and Pajelança, Catimbó, and Batuque (in the northeastern and central regions). According to all descriptions, worship and possession rites were the basic features of these cults.

Origins and Classification of the Cults. The origins of these cults have been widely discussed in the literature. Because of the lack of documentation to determine the places of origin (or at least the embarkation points) of the African slaves, experts have had to identify elements of particular African cultural traditions within these religious communities. They have thus been able to trace the origins, which were unknown to the devotees themselves.

Having discovered the cults' African origins, authors have gone on to attempt to identify elements from the Indian cultures of Brazil, from Roman Catholicism, and from the spiritualism of Allan Kardec, a French medium whose work has been exceptionally influential in Brazil. [*See* Kardecism.] Four general methods for studying and classifying the Afro-Brazilian cults have

been applied: (1) the traditional, or "authentic," African models were compared to the Afro-Brazilian phenomena, which were then classified according to greater or lesser degrees of purity; (2) the cults were studied in their function as means of integrating rural immigrants into urban areas (the cults were found to have thrived in the mid-nineteenth century and again in the 1920s and 1950s—periods when the pace of urbanization accelerated); (3) the "cultural genealogy" approach was again employed but was used this time to assert the predominance of an original Yoruba model for these religions; and (4) an attempt has been made most recently to analyze and describe the religious communities in terms of their relations to and within the society at large. From this standpoint, the African identities assumed by members of a cult provide ways for them to demarcate the boundaries of each group and to levy status on their own community.

Beliefs and Organizational Structures. Rituals are performed at centers called *terreiros*, *centros*, or *tendas*. The centers are named after the cultic deities, called *orixás* or *voduns*, which are of West African origin. Religious groups are structured according to complex hierarchies, which have both sacred and profane positions. The *pai de santo*, who might also be called the *zelador* ("overseer") or *babalorixá* ("father of *orixás*"), occupies the highest office in the religious hierarchy, and has authority over the *filhos* and *filhas* ("sons" and "daughters" of the saints, that is, mediums), who must obey him. Matters concerning rights of succession and authority between the *pais de santo* and the *filhos de santo* often generate internal disputes that lead to the opening of new *terreiros*.

Each cult is based upon a customized, personalized cosmological system. Each medium is consecrated to a deity—whether *orixá*, *vodun*, *guia* ("guide"), *santo* ("saint"), or *entidade* (deity)—who belongs to the pantheon but who takes on a new name or specific characteristics that somehow transform him or her into an *orixá de fulana* (roughly, "so-and-so's *orixá*," that is, an individual's own *orixá*). Sometimes a medium is consecrated to more than one deity. The actual initiation of the mediums is long and involves various ceremonies.

One of the most important of the Afro-Brazilian cults' rituals is the *consulta* ("consultation"), in which a medium gives assistance to those who have come for help. Specific explanations and solutions are supplied for people's misfortunes. The "logic" of witchcraft is often employed in identifying causes: for example, a cult member would not see job loss as caused by the economic problems of the government or by bad performance on the job but rather by the witchcraft of someone out to do him harm.

As part of their worship, some cults perform possession rituals intended to help those in need of assistance. In Candomblé, Xangô, Tambor de Mina, and Nagô, such rituals are deemphasized. Within the Umbanda cult it is believed that the *guias* come down to earth to help and protect those in distress. At Umbanda *consultas*, mediums go into trances and then prescribe remedies for the various evils afflicting those seeking help. These problems can include unemployment, slack business, illness, victimization by witchcraft, and so on.

The cults are superficially monotheistic. The *orixás* are organized in intricate hierarchical systems and are identified with Roman Catholic saints. (The original purpose of this identification may have been to prevent suppression of the African religions by white slaveowners.) The fact that the *orixás* are identified with Catholic saints, however, hardly obscures their function as deities within the religious system. The various *orixás*—including Ogum, Oxossi, Iansã, Xangô, Oxum, Oxalá, Iemanjá, Ibejí, and Exu—are associated with different saints and have different characteristics depending on the particular cults within which they appear. For example, in some of the cults (Candomblé, Xangô, Tambor de Mina, and Nagô), these deities are conceived of as natural elements. In Umbanda, the *guias* represent the spirits of the dead. All deities except Olorun (the high god of the Yoruba, who in Brazil is often identified with God the Father of the Christian Trinity) can communicate with human beings through mediums. [*See* Olorun.*]

The cult known as Umbanda arose in Rio in the 1920s and in the last three decades has spread vigorously throughout Brazil. Thousands of Umbanda *centros* exist all over the country; some cultists have even tried to organize them into federations, but with little success. Because there is no one institution or organization governing them, the *terreiros* and the *pais de santo* are free to create and enforce their own rules.

The social organization of the Umbanda pantheon is hierarchical and military in structure. The African deities lead "battle lines" or "hosts" of spirits, which are grouped as spirits of light and spirits of darkness. In Umbanda and in the so-called Candomblé de Caboclo practiced in Bahia, there are also other deities: *pretos velhos*, or spirits of old black slaves, and *caboclos*, or spirits of Indians.

Exu, who is identified with the devil of the Catholics, is the messenger between the deities and mankind. In Candomblé, the ceremonies begin with the *padê de Exu* ("offerings to Exu"). In Umbanda, however, Exu and the Pomba Gira, his female counterpart, are not worshiped in all the *terreiros*, nor do their ritual offerings involve animal sacrifices. Animal sacrifices are performed in

Candomblé, Tambor de Mina, Nagô, Xangô, Catimbó, Batuque, and Pajelança.

Places of Worship, Iconography, and Dress. In Umbanda, places of worship vary in size. There are *centros* or *tendas* with more than two thousand mediums and smaller *centros* with perhaps twenty or thirty mediums. Generally an altar is set up in the "embodying room," the room where the mediums become possessed by spirits. This altar holds small plaster images representing the Roman Catholic saints associated with the *orixás*. Other plaster images are found on the altar: *caboclos* (dark-skinned men and women in loincloths and feather headdresses, holding bows and arrows) and the *pretos velhos* (stooped, old black men and women, pipes in their mouths, seated on small stools). Images of Exu are locked inside a small house outside the embodying room. In Umbanda, Exu is iconographically represented as a man in a white suit, his hat on, carrying a walking stick, and looking very much like a *malandro*, a bohemian or underworld figure of Rio. The Pomba Gira is represented as a sexy woman in a low-cut dress, laughing derisively and looking like a prostitute. In some places of worship there is no iconographic representation of the spirits at all.

In Candomblé, Xangô, Tambor de Mina, and Nagô, the mediums wear colorful clothes, including voluminous lacy skirts; the images of the *orixás* also wear distinctive garments and adornments. During the ceremonies, the mediums sing and chant in Yoruba while the drums, called *atabaques*, are beat in different rhythms for each *orixá*. The *filhos de santo* dance in a circle to this music and gradually go into trance; attendants then dress them in ritual vestments. The trance follows certain rules, and each *orixá* is expected to behave in a certain way.

Umbanda mediums wear white clothing. The singing is performed in Portuguese but is not necessarily accompanied by *atabaques*. (Often participants simply clap their hands to set the rhythm.) The mediums also dance in a circle and go into trance but remain in their white clothing—that is, there are no other ritual vestments.

Social and Historical Considerations. At first the Afro-Brazilian cults were officially forbidden, and during certain periods they have been persecuted, especially during the dictatorship of Getúlio Dornelles Vargas (1937–1945). Cult members have generally come from the lower classes, but the cults have always attracted some wealthier participants. The wealthy have, however, demanded political support in exchange for protecting cults and places of worship. Today, participation is quite open, and the votes of the Umbanda community, roughly estimated at twenty million (one-sixth of Brazil's population) are courted by politicians. Many religious celebrations are now supported by state governments and have been included in the official calendars of tourist festivities. At the ritual celebration for Iemanjá, the goddess of the sea waters, the beaches of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Bahia are crowded with thousands of people bearing offerings for the deity.

Differences between cults are often founded on each cult's degree of identification with its African roots and therefore the degree to which its devotees feel their practice to be more "authentic" than that of other cults. Umbanda, for instance, arose in Rio as a middle-class movement resulting from a disagreement with Kardec's spiritualism. This splinter group wanted to "purify" the Afro-Brazilian elements of the cults.

Candomblé presents internal differences because of its various "nations": Keto, Angola, Mina, Gege, Mozambique, Nagô, and so forth—which are names given in Brazil to the African tribes in which specific beliefs and practices are thought to have originated (or, more likely, to the embarkation points of the African slaves). Thus a Nagô *terreiro* in Bahia may present different characteristics from those of a Nagô *terreiro* in Recife. Further, Candomblé as a whole differs from Umbanda, and the latter is different from Pajelança, Catimbó, and Batuque. Each group affirms that its characteristics are the most authentic, but the profusion of ritual differences leads the observer to doubt that any of them is "authentic" in the sense of being perfectly faithful to its African heritage.

Emphasis on the African traditions that perdure in their culture expresses the drama enacted by underprivileged Brazilian groups as they search for an identity. As cult members, a group of black workers, for example, are enabled to see themselves as not just black workers but as members of, say, the Nagô cult, a perception that confers on them a higher status within the Brazilian social stratification.

With its focus on rituals of assistance, Umbanda emphasizes another aspect of Brazilian social life: what Peter Fry (1982) calls "the shrewd manipulation of personal relations." The predominance of authoritarian structures in Brazilian organizations has made it difficult for people to participate fully in political and governmental life. Fry sees Umbanda as the ritual dramatization of this issue, and he claims that participation in cults provides "one of the only ways to achieve certain goals" for members of oppressed groups.

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YVONNE MAGGIE

Translated from Portuguese by Maria Celina Deiró Hahn

AFRO-CARIBBEAN RELIGIONS. *See under* Caribbean Religions.

AFRO-SURINAMESE RELIGIONS. The Republic of Surinam, formerly Dutch Guiana, lies on the northeast shoulder of South America, at 2°–6° north latitude, 54°–58° west longitude (163,266 sq km), bordered by Guyana, Brazil, French Guiana, and the Atlantic Ocean. The ethnically diverse population—numbering about 380,000 in Surinam (Du., Suriname) and another 180,000 now living in the Netherlands—consists of approximately 38 percent "Hindustanis" (descendants of contract laborers imported from India during the late nineteenth century), 31 percent "Creoles" (descendants of African slaves), 15 percent "Javanese" (descendants of Indonesians imported as contract laborers in the early twentieth century), 10 percent "Maroons" (descendants of African slaves who escaped from plantations and formed their own communities in Surinam's forested interior), and smaller numbers of Portuguese Jews, Chinese, and Lebanese—plus the eight thousand remaining Amerindians whose ancestors were once the country's sole inhabitants. Except for the Maroons and some Amerindians, almost the whole population lives along the coastal strip, with nearly half residing in the capital, Paramaribo.

Historical Background. The first large-scale permanent settlement of Surinam came in 1651, when one hundred Englishmen from Barbados established a plantation colony. The Dutch took over in 1667, and during the next century and a half imported more than 300,000 Africans as slaves, drawing on a remarkable diversity of African societies and language groups. All indications point to an unusually early and rapid process of "creolization," with the slaves creating new institutions (e.g., languages and religions) by combining and elaborating their various African heritages with very little reference to the world of their European masters.

Slave Religion. The new Afro-Surinamese religion created by plantation slaves during the earliest decades of settlement already contained the central features of its two main present-day variants—the religion of the coastal Creoles (often called Winti) and the religions of the various Maroon groups. Among Surinam slaves one found, for example, many forms of divination to uncover the specific causes of illness or misfortune; rituals, including complex drumming and dancing, in which individuals were possessed by the spirits of, among others, ancestors and snake gods, and by forest and river spirits; beliefs about multiple souls; ideas about the ways that social conflict can cause illness; extensive rites for twins; secret male-warrior cults; and a

focus on elaborate and lengthy funerals as the most important of all ritual occasions. Even the whites, who witnessed only a tiny proportion of slave rites, depended on the Afro-Surinamese slave religion for their own well-being. One eighteenth-century report describes how, in spite of the presence of eight white physicians in the colony, the slaves "play the greatest role with their herbs and their pretended cures, both among Christians and among Jews" (Nassy, 1974, p. 156). And the most famous slave curer-diviner, the eighteenth-century Kwasi, near the end of his life became accustomed to receiving letters from abroad addressed to "The Most Honorable and Most Learned Gentleman, Master Phillipus van Quassie, Professor of Herbology in Suriname" (Price, 1983).

Afro-Surinamese slave religion, through its interlocking beliefs and rites, provided the focus of slave culture, binding individuals ritually to their ancestors, descendants, and collaterals; expressing a firm sense of community in spite of a crushingly oppressive plantation regime; and—on many occasions—serving as the inspiration and mechanism for revolt. One European described this latter aspect of a 1770s "winty-play" on a plantation:

> Sage Matrons Dancing and Whirling Round in the Middle of an Audience, till Absolutely they froath at the mouth And drop down in the middle of them; Whatever She says to be done during this fit of Madness is Sacredly Performed by the Surrounding Multitude, which makes these meetings Exceedingly dangerous Amongst the Slaves, who are often told to murder their Masters or Desert to the Woods.
>
> (Stedman, 1985, chap. 26)

And numerous colonial laws prohibiting Winti-plays or public drumming stand as testimony to the planters' well-founded fears.

Coastal Creole Winti. The folk religion of Surinam Creoles (that majority of the Afro-Surinamese population who are not Maroons) is most often referred to by outsiders as Winti (said to derive from the English *wind*) or Afkodré (from the Dutch *afgoderij,* "idolatry"). But like many folk religions (such as Haitian Voodoo), it has no special name that is used by its adherents. For them, it is simply the core of their way of life. Since emancipation in 1863, the great majority of Creoles have also been nominal Christians; the most recent figures show somewhat more than half to be Protestants (with Moravians the most numerous) and the remainder Roman Catholics. Afro-Surinamese differ from most other Afro-Americans in the extent to which their Christianity and folk religion are compartmentalized. All observers of Winti have been struck by the remarkable

lack of syncretism, in a comparative context, between Christian and Afro-American beliefs and rites in Surinam. In spite of the participation of Creoles in modern, Western-style Caribbean life, Winti continues to operate in contexts that are largely untouched by Christianity. Winti also plays a major role in the lives of many of the Surinamese who now reside in the Netherlands.

Winti provides an all-encompassing but flexible design for living. The everyday visible world is complemented by a normally unseen world that is peopled by gods and spirits of tremendous variety, who interact with humans constantly. Scholars have often tried to classify the great variety of Winti gods into four "pantheons"—all ranged below an otiose, distant, West-African-type sky god—those of the air, the earth, the water, and the forest, but such classifications may well impose an inappropriate rigidity on a shifting set of beliefs and rituals that are called into play to deal with diverse and very practical everyday human needs. The major gods and spirits include a variety of *kromanti* (fierce healing spirits), *apuku* (often-malevolent forest spirits), *aisa* (localized earth spirits), *vodu* (boa constrictor spirits), *aboma* (anaconda spirits), and a great host of others. Like the spirits of the dead, who intervene constantly in the lives of the living and are the focus of much ritual activity, these nonhuman gods or spirits can speak through possessed mediums. Frequent rites, involving specialized dances, drumming, and songs, are used to honor and placate each type of spirit, and the spirits themselves appear on these occasions, through possession, to make their wishes known. Such rites are led by *bonuman* or *lukuman* (who may be men or women), many of whom specialize in particular kinds of spirits. But Winti is a strongly participatory religion, in which every individual plays an active role, and specialization or special knowledge is widely distributed among the population.

Winti deals with everyday concerns. Typically, an illness, minor misfortune, bad dream, or portent suggests divination by a *lukuman.* Using any of a variety of techniques, he suggests the cause—for example, a particular ancestor feels neglected, a jealous neighbor has attempted sorcery, a relative's snake spirit disapproves of a proposed marriage, the person's "soul" requires a special ritual—and then prescribes an appropriate rite. During the course of a single case of illness or misfortune, large numbers of relatives and friends may need to be mobilized and considerable financial resources expended. *Bonuman* and *lukuman* are always compensated.

Maroon Religions. Today, there are six Maroon (or "Bush Negro") groups living along rivers in the interior

of the country: the Djuka and Saramaka (each number-ing about twenty thousand people), the Matawai, Aluku, and Paramaka (each about two thousand people), and the Kwinti (fewer than five hundred people). Their reli-gions, like their languages and other aspects of culture, are related to one another, with the sharpest division being between the eastern groups (Djuka, Paramaka, Aluku) and the central groups (Saramaka, Matawai, Kwinti). Descended from slaves who escaped from coastal plantations during Surinam's first century of colonization, they have lived in relative isolation from the world of the coast.

Maroons have always enjoyed an extremely rich rit-ual life, which is totally integrated into their matri-lineally based tribal social organization. Christian mis-sions have had differential impact on the Maroon groups: for example, the Matawai and several thousand of the Saramaka are nominally Moravians, but the great majority of Maroons continue to participate fully in religions that were forged by their ancestors, from many different African traditions, into a vibrant new synthesis. Resembling Winti in terms of many of the particular gods and spirits invoked, the Maroon reli-gions stand apart in their more absolute integration of belief and ritual into all aspects of life. New World cre-ations drawing on Old World ideas, these Maroon reli-gions remain today the most "African" of all religions in the Americas.

Rituals of many kinds form a central part of everyday Maroon life. Such decisions as where to clear a garden or build a house, whether to make a trip, or how to deal with theft or adultery are made in consultation with vil-lage deities, ancestors, forest spirits, snake gods, and other such powers. Human misfortune is directly linked to other people's antisocial acts, through complex chains of causation involving gods and spirits. Any ill-ness or other misfortune requires immediate divination and ritual action in collaboration with these spirits and others, such as warrior gods. The means of communi-cating with these entities vary from spirit possession and the consultation of oracle bundles carried on men's heads to the interpretation of dreams. Gods, spirits, and ancestors, who are a constant presence in daily life, are also honored and placated through frequent prayers, li-bations, and great feasts.

The rituals surrounding birth and other life crises are extensive, as are those relating to more mundane activ-ities, from hunting a tapir to planting a rice field. Among Maroons, funerals constitute the single most complex ritual event, spanning a period of many months, directly involving many hundreds of people, and uniting the world of the dead with that of the living through specialized ritual action such as coffin divina-tion, and extensive singing, dancing, and drumming. Specialized cults—such as those devoted to twins, or to finding someone lost in the forest, or to making rain—are the possessions of particular matrilineal clans, and individual Maroons may also specialize in the treat-ment of particular types of spiritual problems, or in particular ritual activities, such as drumming for snake-god rites. But most Maroon ritual knowledge is broadly spread; these are highly participatory religions.

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AFTERLIFE. [*This entry focuses on beliefs about life after death. It consists of four articles:*

An Overview
Geographies of Death
Jewish Concepts
Chinese Concepts

The first article provides a general introduction to the re-ligious beliefs about the possibility of life after death from the point of view of numerous traditions; the second pre-sents various mythological depictions of the abode of the dead. The last two articles treat notions of afterlife in two areas of particular interest, Jewish and Chinese tradi-tions.]

An Overview

Views of the afterlife, of expectations concerning some form of human survival after death, cannot be isolated from the totality of the understanding of the nature of the divine, the nature of humankind, time and history, and the structure of reality. Not all religious persons have addressed the same kinds of questions, nor have ideas always been formulated in a uniform way by those nurtured within any one of the many religious traditions of the world. Nonetheless, there is a certain commonality in the kinds of basic questions that have been addressed. This article is organized topically in terms of the ways in which peoples from a range of theological perspectives in different ages and religions have seen fit to respond to these questions.

The Nature of the Divine

The basic issue concerning the nature of the divine is whether God is to be considered a personal being with and to whom one can relate or is held to be reality itself, the source and ground of being in impersonal or nonpersonal form. Between these absolutes lie a myriad of possibilities, compounded and enriched by a variety of experiences that can be termed mystical. Monotheists have struggled through the ages with questions concerning the corporeality of God, including shape and dimension, and, correspondingly, whether humankind can actually come to gaze in the hereafter on the visage of God. Others have concluded not only that the divine being is not to be conceived in any anthropomorphic form but also that the divine being, in the most absolute sense, is removed from the realm of interaction and rests as the essence of nonmanifestation. Determinations about the nature of the divine have direct ramifications, as will be seen, for human understanding of life after death.

The tension between the two concepts (the God of form and God without form) has arisen in a multitude of ways for faithful persons of various traditions. Those who depersonalize the divine to the extent that they see it as pure reality in which the essence of all things participates must ultimately sacrifice the relationship of deity and devotee, whether this be understood on the model of master and servant, parent and child, or lover and beloved. This was the problem for the philosopher Rāmānuja in twelfth-century India, whose qualified nondualism was the logically problematic attempt to reconcile a philosophical monism with the overwhelming need to respond to God in loving devotion. The Andalusian Muslim mystic Muḥy al-Dīn Ibn al-'Arabī, writing about the same time, posited a series of descending levels of the godhead through which the abso-lute, nonmanifest divine gradually actualizes itself to the form of a Lord with whom humans can interact.

The Vision of God. Those religious traditions that have articulated an understanding of the divine in polytheistic form have tended to envision the particular gods in a concrete manner, often with the implication that the dead, or at least some of the dead, will be able to see the gods visually in the afterlife. Pictorial representations from the Middle and New Kingdoms in Egypt portray the dead person being lifted out of the sarcophagus by the jackal Anubis, taken to the Hall of Double Justice and judged, and then brought into the presence of Osiris, to be led by him to the Elysian Fields.

From the earliest times, Indian thinkers have tended to conceptualize their gods in quite specifically graphic ways. In the Vedic literature, Yama, who is at once the first mortal and the god of the dead, is portrayed as sitting under a leafy bower with his two four-eyed dogs in the presence of gods and ancestors to welcome the dead into a life that is a blissful version of earthly existence. In theistic Hinduism, the devotee expects to gaze on the face of the Beloved as Rādhā beheld Kṛṣṇa in their moments of most intense passion. The faithful Buddhist to whom access to Sukhāvatī, the Pure Land, is granted will enjoy the bliss of contemplating Amitābha Buddha himself.

Vision of the divine in the afterlife is not limited to polytheistic traditions. The sight of God in the gardens of Paradise is cherished by Muslims as the culmination of a life of piety; similar expectations have been part of the hopes of many Christians. Nor is it the case that in all polytheistic traditions there is the assumption that the dead will see those gods whom they concretely portray or conceptualize. Among the ancient Mesopotamians, the gods of the lower world were viewed as cruel and vindictive and those of the upper regions as arbitrary, with humans doomed to exist as shades in the nether regions. Thus no amount of individual effort in this life could assure one of a blissful existence in the hereafter, let alone a vision of the gods.

Divine Justice and Judgment. Never in the Mesopotamian consideration did there seem to be any understanding that the individual who lived the good life on earth might come to an end better than that found in the cheerless underground pit of Arallu. Justice as a function of divinity never came to bear, and the hero-king Gilgamesh, in a work attributed to the second millennium BCE, could rail against the arbitrary way in which the gods meted out death to humankind while keeping life and immortality for themselves.

It is, of course, not true that justice need be a less significant factor in the consideration of the afterlife by

a society that is professedly polytheistic. What often has been the case is that the concept of ethical responsibility on the part of the individual (with concomitant judgment by the deity in some form) blends with an emphasis on magic and ritual as assurance of a felicitous state in the hereafter. The ancient Egyptian view is particularly interesting in this connection. *Maat*, the conceptual form of justice, order, and stability, became personified in the Hall of Double Justice and was understood as the means by which Osiris, the lord of the kingdom of the living dead, was finally apprised of the moral character of the one brought before him in judgment. Justice was seen as an extension of a concept of order that characterized the Egyptian worldview and that, as an essential of the eschatological reality, was in direct relationship to the establishment of stability over chaos at the time of creation. And yet it is clear from the texts that as significant as were concepts of order and justice to their view of life and death, the Egyptians never completely abandoned the feeling that the gods might not really (be able to) exercise absolute justice. Thus it was necessary to rely on ritual and magical formulas, in this way assuring that the dead would always have at their fingertips the necessary knowledge and information to answer any questions that might be posed in the final court of arbitration.

Justice, as an abstract principle of order for many ancient societies, came in monotheistic communities to be translated into a quality of the godhead itself, with the immediate ramification of justice as an ethical imperative for human beings in recognition of the nature and being of God. Thus in Islam there is a clear understanding that because God is just, he requires that a person live justly, and the quality of the individual life is actually the determining factor in the final judgment.

One of the earliest perceptions of the god who embodies this kind of justice in his very being is found in the thought of Zarathushtra (Zoroaster), the Persian prophet of the first millennium BCE. He saw in Ahura Mazdā the principles of truth, righteousness, and order upheld in much the same way as the Egyptians saw them upheld and embodied by Maat. Ahura Mazdā, however, was not for Zarathushtra the personification of truth but the great advocate of it, the divine lord into whose presence the righteous are allowed to enter at the end of time. There was never in the development of Zoroastrian orthodoxy any indication that the just could expect to see the person of Ahura Mazdā in human form, but rather there was the understanding that the soul who has lived a life of justice will be given the privilege of beholding a form of pure light.

In the development of Old Testament thought, divine justice became a particularly significant issue. In the earlier conceptions, the dark and dusty She'ol as an abode for the dead seems to have been understood much as was the Mesopotamian Arallu. There Yahveh had no jurisdiction, and gloom was assured for the righteous and wicked alike. The beginnings of hope for a more felicitous end for humankind came through reflections concerning the question of God's power and justice. If God is truly almighty, his dominion must extend to all parts of the earth and to all portions of time. And if he is truly just, then it is inconsistent that the righteous as well as the wicked should be doomed to the bitter existence of She'ol. It was with regard to God's power and justice that the seeds of an idea of resurrection to an eternal reward began to grow in the Jewish consciousness, laying the ground for the later Christian understanding of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

In Hindu and Buddhist thought, the notion of *karman* presupposes a conception of justice and judgment different from that prevailing in monotheistic traditions. Rather than the subjectivity of a judging being, there is the objective and automatic working out of cause and effect. Justice in this understanding is not so much a divine quality as an inexorable law of the universe. In its simplest form the doctrine of *karman* states that what one is now is a direct result of what one has done and been in past existences, and what one does in this lifetime will, with the accumulation of past karmic debt, be the direct determinant of the state of one's future existence. Lifetime follows lifetime in whatever form of life each successive existence takes, and liberation from the round of existences is achieved not by the intervening grace of a god but through knowledge of the truth of the realization of self. In the Vedantic understanding of the Upaniṣads, the content of this knowledge is that the self *(ātman)* is indeed identical with the Self *(brāhman)*, the underlying reality of all that is.

The complex of religious responses that makes up the fabric of Hinduism and Buddhism, however, includes as a major component the understanding on the part of many that the godhead must be conceptualized in a personal way. In terms of sheer numbers, far more Hindus have placed their faith in the saving grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa than have ever held to a doctrine of absolute monism. And despite the automatic character of *karman* in determining rebirth, divine or quasi-divine figures do continue to play a judicative role in the religious imagination. In Mahāyāna Buddhism there are ten judges of the dead, one of whom is a holdover from the Vedic Yama, despite the fact that in strict philosophical or ontological terms it is a Buddhist tenet that there is no such thing as a god who can judge or even a soul that can be the object of judgment.

Intercession. Issues of justice give rise to questions about the possibility of intercession for the deceased on the part of human or superhuman agency. The forms of intercession are many, from the role played by the living in providing a proper burial and maintaining the mechanical artifices of the tomb to the specific intervention in the judgment process by a figure who can plead for the well-being of the soul whose fate is in the balance. Muslims traditionally have taken great comfort in the thought that the Prophet himself will be on hand to intercede for each individual believer when he comes before the awesome throne of judgment, and through the centuries Christians have relied on the assurance that Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of God to intercede. The Buddhist concept of the *bodhisattva* is, in one sense, an extension of the idea of intercession: through the dedication or transference of merit, the saving being, who needs no more merit himself, can directly pass it on to individuals who have not reached the state of enlightenment. [*See* Merit, *article on* Buddhist Concepts.]

The role of living persons in helping to determine the fate of the dead has ranged from giving the deceased a fitting and proper interment and celebrating a communal feast in memory of the departed (often to ensure that he or she actually stays "departed" and does not return to haunt the living) to maintaining for all time, as was the Egyptian intention, the physical apparatuses of the tomb. Sometimes it is held that these responsibilities are carried out primarily for the support of the living or out of respect for the dead. Often, however, there is a conviction that the living may actually be able o influence or help determine the future condition and existence of the souls in question. Some have challenged the supposition that the fate of the soul of the deceased must rest, even in part, on the continued ministrations of those fallible individuals with whom it had a relationship while on earth. Responsibility for the dead on the part of the living has often been seen as incompatible with a belief in the justice and mercy of God. Nonetheless, some form of prayer for the deceased on the part of the living continues to be an important responsibility of pious persons in all religious traditions.

The Nature of Humankind

If it is essential to a vision of the afterlife to have some understanding of the nature of that divine being or reality to whom humankind returns at death, it is no less important to have some conception of what element in the human makeup is considered to do the returning. In every religious tradition, the way in which an individual is conceived to be constituted in this life directly determines the way in which he or she is thought to survive in an existence after death.

The Human Constitution. Conceptions of the constitution of the human being differ not only among different religious traditions but among different schools of thought within the traditions. Nevertheless, for the purpose of a comparative typology, it is possible to generalize and speak of some of the most significant of these conceptions.

The most immediately obvious distinction, and one that has been drawn in most conceptions of the afterlife, is between the physical and the nonphysical aspects of the human person. This can be understood as the body-spirit dichotomy, with a difference sometimes drawn in the latter between spirit and soul. In the Hebrew view, a person was not understood so much as having a body, something essentially different and apart from the nonphysical side of one's being, as being a body, which implies the totality of the individual and the inseparability of the life principle from the fleshly form. Spirit was said to be blown into the flesh, making it a soul, a whole person. In itself spirit was understood as a manifestation of the divine. This way of distinguishing between soul and spirit was adopted by some Islamic and Christian theologians and philosophers, although in common usage the two terms are essentially interchangeable in both traditions. When an individual is felt to be renewed in a new body in Christ, the experience is often described as spiritual; the body of the resurrection is sometimes thought of as a spiritual body different from the earthly body of flesh and soul.

The notion that an individual is, rather than has, a body is quite foreign to most Eastern thought. In Hindu Sāṃkhya, for example, the body is part of the world of nature or matter *(prakṛti)* but is absolutely distinct from the life principle or self *(puruṣa)* from which it is separated by the process of yoga. It is the very realization of the separation of these two that amounts to liberation for the individual. Advaita Vedānta, while different from the dualistic Sāṃkhya in saying that the body is only part of the world of illusion, would agree that the key to liberation from the round of rebirths is exactly the realization that the soul or self has no lasting bond with anything physical and that the soul is associated with a particular body, human or nonhuman, only temporarily, for the fleeting moments of earthly existence.

The Relationship of the Human to the Divine. The question of what it is that lives on after death must be seen in relation to the basic issue of whether that which is real or lasting in the human person is identical with the divine reality or is essentially different from it. A

position of monism is one end of a spectrum of possible responses. In Advaita Vedānta liberation from successive existences comes only with the realization of the identity of *ātman* (the individual soul) and *brahman* (the Absolute). In some of its Ṣūfī manifestations, esoteric Islam comes very close to identifying the eternal in humans with the eternal essence *(ḥaqq)*, with the further understanding that death and resurrection come in the moment-by-moment realization of that identity.

A very different kind of conceptualization is that characteristic of some traditional societies in which not only is humanity seen to be totally separate from the gods but one exists after death only as a shade or a shadow of one's former self. That which divides the human and the divine in this context is the fact that the gods are immortal and humans are not. In between such alternatives is a range of possibilities suggesting that humans manifest some element of the divine enlivening principle. In most traditions, however, a felicitous hereafter means not the realization of identity of self and absolute, but rather some circumstance in which that which survives death comes to dwell in proximity to the divine.

A number of traditions have held that certain elements that make up an individual actually become manifested and real only at the time of death. The ancient Egyptian, for instance, was said to have come into his or her own only when after death the *ba*, or continuing personality, was fully realized through the joining with its counterpart, *ka*, which acted as a kind of guardian angel. The dead did not become *ka*s but were joined to and guided by them on the journey into the afterlife. Classical Zoroastrian texts describe the soul at death sitting on the headstone of the grave for three days, after which it is led through some good or bad circumstances (depending on one's character) and finally is met by a maiden who takes the form of the actions committed by that person while on earth. The good will thus meet a beautiful creature, while the unrighteous will confront an incredibly ugly hag.

Certain similarities can be seen here with Buddhist conceptions, such as the peaceful and wrathful deities met by the deceased in the after-death visions described in the Tibetan *Book of the Dead*. The great difference is that in the Tibetan understanding one does not meet the alternatives of good or bad but experiences a whole range of deities that represent both the most sublime of human feelings and the personification of one's powers of reason. The wrathful deities are actually only a different aspect of the peaceful ones. The point is that, in some sense, as in the Egyptian and Zoroastrian cases, one comes into contact in an apparently externalized form with aspects of one's own personality, thought, and consequent past action.

Resurrection of the Body. The significance of the body as a continuing entity in the afterlife has been attested to in many traditions. [*See* Resurrection.] The resuscitation of the corpse expected after the elaborate processes of mummification in ancient Egypt implied the hope of permanent physical survival as well as survival of the personality. In Zoroastrian eschatology, one of the clearest statements of physical resurrection comes in the description of the Frashōkereti, or ultimate rehabilitation of the world under the dominion of Ahura Mazdā. The savior Saoshyant will raise the bones of the first ancestors and then those of all humankind, and Ahura Mazdā will invest the bones with life and clothe them with flesh for all time.

In Jewish thought, the soul was first believed to be released from the body at death, but with the development of the idea of resurrection came the belief in the continued importance of the physical body. This belief is carried over to early Christianity: Augustine in the *City of God* says that the resurrected bodies, perfect amalgamations of flesh and spirit, are free to enjoy the satisfactions of food and drink should they so desire. He finds proof for this in the example of Christ consuming a meal after his own resurrection. Proceeding from the original assurance of Jesus that not a hair on the heads of those who are granted eternal life shall perish, Augustine concludes that at the time of the resurrection of the flesh, the body will appear in that size and physical condition in which it appeared at the time of youthful maturity, or would have appeared had it had time to mature. The arguments marshaled by the philosophers of Islam have done little to shake the common faith that the reward for a life of virtue will be the experience of the pleasures of the gardens of paradise in a physical as well as a spiritual way. The kinds of proofs offered by some in the Islamic community against the resurrection of the physical form have been countered rationally, and ignored emotionally, by those for whom a purely spiritual revival seems somehow to fall short of the promises of God and the world-affirming nature of Islam itself.

Continued Existence as Spirit. From the earliest times, characteristic of primitive societies but certainly not exclusive to them, humankind has had a seemingly natural fear of the dead. To some extent this can be explained in terms of one's own apprehension about the meaning of death for one personally, but to a much greater extent, it seems to derive from a stated or unstated feeling that the dead have some power over the living and can actually interfere with the processes of

life on earth. In more extreme cases, this has led to a kind of worship of the dead, in which those who have passed into another existence have sometimes assumed the status of gods. This has been evidenced particularly in China and Japan in the long history of ancestor worship. More generally it takes the form of concern for the proper disposal and continued remembrance of the dead, in the hope that the deceased will in no way return to "haunt" or interfere with life here on earth. [*See* Ghosts.]

Commonly held is the assumption that because a being has undergone the experience of death, it is privy to information not held by those still in the mortal condition. Echoed in much of the great religious literature of the world is the theme that if only the dead could or would return in some form, they would have much to tell the living. The vanity of this wish for information from the departed is denied by those who are convinced that the dead can and do return and have a great deal to tell us about the road that everyone, sooner or later, comes to travel. In many traditions, especially the prophetic, orthodoxy has disdained talk about the reality of ghosts and spirits functioning on earth, and it has fallen to the mythology of folklore to speculate on the best ways to propitiate the spirits of the dead and to ward off those spirits who, for a variety of reasons, are felt to be evil or malicious.

The Role of Community. Consideration only of the destiny of the individual results in a very unbalanced picture of conceptions of the afterlife. Important to the theologies of many of the religions of the world is the relationship of each individual to other individuals, or the idea of community, whether seen from the perspective of this world (is it necessary to be a member of a community in order to reach a blessed hereafter?) or the next (is there a community of the saved, or perhaps of the damned, in a future existence?). Common to prophetic religions is the expectation that the eschaton will result in reuniting or making whole both the individual and some portion (often the totality) of the human community. It is part of Islamic eschatological tradition that on the Day of Resurrection the specific communities of all the prophets, including that of Muhammad, will be assembled, each at its own pond, awaiting the judgment.

The notion of community, or the importance of membership in a particular group, takes on a different kind of significance when viewed from the perspective of this world. In the Hindu tradition, liberating knowledge is limited to the twice-born, although this belief is greatly modified by those to whom a devotional relationship to some aspect of the godhead implies salvation rather than liberation. The question of whether one must be a

Christian to be saved has engendered among scholars and theologians of Christianity heated arguments that still have not been resolved. *Ummah*, community in the Muslim sense of a religio-political unity, is a tremendously significant element in the understanding of Islam; some contemporary Muslims still insist that one cannot be saved if one is not a Muslim, and that one cannot be Muslim outside of community.

There are some obvious instances in the history of religions in which the community of the saved is the community of the victorious in the sense of realized eschatology, that is, the establishment of a kingdom of righteousness for a specific people here on earth. This is implicit in the theme of Zionism in Jewish thought (although it is only one interpretation, or aspect, of the Zionist ideal as it has developed historically). Even Zarathushtra, if we can correctly interpret the *Gāthās*, seems at first to have envisioned the victory of *asha* ("truth, righteousness") over *druj* ("falsehood, evil") as taking place in the pastoral setting of eastern Persia within the context of this-worldly time. Realized eschatology in Christian thought refers to the understanding that Christ's life and death have, in fact, established the kingdom of God on earth for those who, in faith, are part of the body of Christ; in the mysticism of the *Gospel of John*, the Parousia, or second coming of Jesus, has already taken place. Such considerations lead directly to questions of time and history as a further category for reflection on conceptions of the afterlife.

Time and History

The way in which time, its passage and its purpose, is understood in different worldviews has a direct bearing on conceptions of the afterlife. Eastern religions and philosophies generally have conceived time as revolving in cycles, within each of which are periods of creation and destruction, with each "final" cataclysm to be followed again by the entire process of generation. In the elaborate Hindu schema of the epics and Purāṇas, there are moments of creation and destruction, eschatons when the entire universe is obliterated and reabsorbed into the body of the deity, but with the implication that this very process is endless. At the other pole are those "historical" (usually prophetic) religions that postulate a creation when time is said to have begun and a final eschaton when time as we know it will reach its conclusion. Here history is a given, a once-and-for-all process that begins with the divine initiation and is often understood as depending at each moment on the sustaining, re-creating act of the maker. Implicit is the belief that there is a plan to history, although humans may not be able to comprehend it, and that in some sense the end, when all creation will be glorified and time

will give way to eternity, is already cast and determined.

Ideal Time. Many religious traditions envision a certain period that can be described as ideal time. This may be an epoch that existed before the beginning of time and will be actualized again when time itself ceases, or it may be conceptualized as having occurred within the framework of history and, thus, having the potential to be realized again in time. [*See* Golden Age.] In the ancient Egyptian view of the universe as static, ideal time was that continuing time established by the original creation, when order replaced chaos and *maat* was the stability of society as well as the individual ethic of justice and right. A similar understanding is expressed in the Australian Aboriginal concept of a sacred period during which the mythical ancestors lived, an epoch that is removed from any linear understanding of time. In that culture, in which language has no term for time in the abstract, the infinitely remote past is related to the present through the mythology of what has been called "the Dreaming."

For those traditions that emphasize a cyclical view of history, no time can be considered ideal. In one sense, time is not ultimately real, although, in another sense, its constant repetition means that it is perceived to be more plentiful than for people of historical traditions. Insofar as one has to deal with the illusions of reality in Indian thought, the best of times might be that represented by the beginning of each of the great cosmic cycles. From that point until the terrible *kaliyuga*, time (or rather the series of events and characteristics of the periods) degenerates and finally culminates in the awesome destruction of flood and fire that concludes the cycle and initiates a new beginning. For the theistic Hindu, the perfect moment is actually that eternity in which he or she is able to abide in the presence of the Lord.

In the prophetic traditions, ideal time can be understood in several ways. The ideal age in one sense is that ushered in by the eschaton, the end of time that is itself the realization of eternity. Yet for most of the prophetic religions there is a time within history, theoretical or actualized, that can be described as ideal. For some Christians, this has been understood as the time of the historical Jesus and his initiation of the continued kingdom of God on earth. There have been significant differences among Christians in interpretation of the meaning of a new heaven and a new earth. The restoration of Zion for the Jew has immediate implications; some have argued that ideal time is any time in which Jerusalem is actualized as the home of the Jews. For the Muslim, ideal time in its best historical sense was the period of the Prophet and the first four right-guided ca-

liphs of the Islamic community, a time potentially realizable again at any moment.

Rebirth. Issues of time and history relate directly to the question of how an individual soul (or spirit or body) maintains continuity between this life and that that lies beyond death. Some traditions hold generally to the idea of one life on earth, death, some kind of resurrection or rebirth, and then continued existence on another plane. Others believe in reincarnation (metempsychosis or transmigration) with its possibilities of a series of lives on earth or elsewhere. Human imagination, or intuition, has resourcefully suggested many variations on these alternatives. [*See* Reincarnation *and* Transmigration.]

For the most part, traditions that see time as linear and progressive have rejected the idea of rebirth on this earth and relegated to the ranks of heresy those who have attempted to espouse such a theory or to combine it with the more traditional understanding of death and resurrection to propose an existence apart from the physical world. For those who hold to the idea of resurrection, final life is not automatic but is granted by the specific act of a being or beings who actually bring the dead back to life. The victory over death may be seen as occurring immediately after the demise of the individual or as coming at some final *eschaton*, as when the savior Saoshyant breathes life into the lifeless bodies of all humanity in Zoroastrian thought, or, in Islamic tradition, when the individual souls are called to the final day of judgment.

Eastern mystical thought has articulated the concept of reincarnation with some consistency, although in the Buddhist case the difficult problem arises of identifying what it is that is born in another body if there is nothing that can be called an individual soul. Buddhist thinkers have developed elaborate and complex theories for reconciling the concept of *anātman* ("no soul") with the six categories of being into which the non-soul can be reborn. Even those religions that contemplate aeons of potential rebirths, however, do project the hope of a final release from this recurring condition.

To say that one's soul is immortal is to imply that it has always existed and that it will never for a moment cease to exist. This is the basic understanding of those who postulate recurring births in a variety of incarnations, but it need not necessarily be linked to conceptions of transmigration. A great debate took place in Islam between the philosophers, whose rational directives led them to conclude that immortality was the only possibility for humans, and the theologians, whose adherence to the word of the Qur'ān dictated the necessity of belief in the specific acts of creation and resurrection from the dead. The concepts of resurrection and

immortality, however, are certainly not always seen as unambiguously antithetical. Theologians have long struggled with the determination of which term is more applicable to the Christian understanding, or whether both might in some senses pertain.

Eschatology. For those who adhere to the idea of resurrection, with the implication of some form of life eternal to follow, one of the most pressing questions concerns when that resurrection is going to occur. Millenarian expectations have taken a variety of forms in both Judaism and Christianity, with the chiliastic hope in the latter for Christ's return. This kind of eschatological anticipation is generally seen in the context of the specifics of judgment. Here again, however, there is often no clearly formulated theological statement about precisely when judgment will take place or whether it is to be an individual or a universal adjudication. Some see it as happening soon after death, while others postulate a waiting period, perhaps of great length, before the eschatological events that herald a universal judgment. [*See* Eschatology.]

In early Christianity, there was the expectation that the return of Jesus to usher in the new age would be so soon as to come within the lifetime of the community of those who had had fellowship with him. The passage of time moderated this expectation, and new theories had to be developed to account for the state of the soul in what came to be seen as a waiting period before the messianic age.

In the Persian case, Zarathushtra himself apparently had first felt that the kingdom of righteousness would be established on earth and then implied that eternal reward or punishment would instead come after death. Later, Sasanid orthodoxy, in developing its theories of three-thousand-year cycles, came to expect a kind of temporary reward or punishment lasting from death to the period of the Frashōkereti, at which momentous time a final purging through molten metal will purify all souls for their eternal habitation in the presence of Ahura Mazdā.

Other of the prophetic religions have hesitated to interpret with such exacting clarity or to understand the particulars of reward and punishment so graphically, yet in a general way have postulated a similar period between the death of the individual and the general resurrection and ushering in of the final age. The suggestions of scriptures such as the New Testament and the Qur'ān are sufficiently unsystematic that doctrines about specific aspects of life after death have often been founded on implication rather than specification.

Savior Figures. Implicit in the eschatological expectation of Judaism and Christianity is the hope for a messiah or savior. For the Jews that person has not yet come. For the Christians he has come once and will return at the Parousia. The savior concept is somewhat different in Islam; it is embodied particularly in the figure of the Mahdi and involves a rather detailed understanding of the theological distinctions between Sunnī and Shī'ī thought as well as the relationship of the Mahdi in its eschatological framework to the restorer and final ruler of the regenerated community of Islam.

Some variation on the idea of a savior or restorer to appear at a future time is to be found in almost all of the living religious traditions, whatever their concept of the flow and structure of time. Saoshyant of the Zoroastrian or Parsi community; the Messiah of the Old and New Testaments; Kalki, the tenth incarnation of Viṣṇu, in theistic Hinduism; and Maitreya, the future Buddha—all reflect an understanding that despite the almost universal importance placed on the necessity of individual human responsibility, it is still possible to hope for the merciful assistance of some being, divine or semidivine, in the determination of one's future circumstances. [*See* Soteriology.]

The Structure of Reality

The interrelatedness of the kinds of themes one can develop in considering an issue such as life after death is obvious. The preceding discussion has touched on much of what falls also into the category of conceptions of the structure of reality. It therefore becomes a question not of considering new material as such, but of viewing some of the same concepts from a different perspective.

The World in Time and Space. The eternality of the world, and its subsequent relationship to the eternality of heaven or the rehabilitated universe, has been postulated in a variety of ways in the history of religious thought. [*See* Eternity.] The ancient Egyptian expected that the static nature of the world and of society would mean their perpetuation eternally. In the materialistic Zoroastrian construct, the final rehabilitation of the earth implies its purification and its joining, with a purified hell, to the extension of heaven. Judaism presents an example of the constant tension between a hope for this world, renewed, and the kingdom of heaven as an otherworldly and eternal realm. In the Hindu and Buddhist conceptions, the world is not only not eternal but is in a constant process of degeneration. Even here, however, insofar as the world is constantly re-created within the realm of conditioned *saṃsāra*, it is eternal in another sense.

For many peoples, conceptions of the afterlife are directly related to the way they understand the basic divisions of the universe. The mythology of many of the ancient traditions is rich in descriptions and visual rep-

resentations of the heavens, earth, and nether regions. A classic theme of religious geography has been that the heavens are located somewhere above the earth and the nether regions below, and that these have been identified to a greater or lesser extent with the location of heaven(s) and hell(s) as after-death abodes in whatever form these have been conceived. A not uncommon spatial concept is that of the land of the dead located in the west, the place of the setting sun, which is repeated in such myths as those of the jackal Anubis, lord of the Egyptian desert, and of the western kingdom of Sukhāvatī, the heaven of bliss of the *bodhisattva* Avalokiteśvara.

Reward and Punishment. It is often in direct relation to the existing understanding of the structure of the universe that the more specific conceptions of heaven and hell arise. These parallel places of reward and punishment were not generally present in ancient thought. The Mesopotamian *Arallu* and the Hebrew *She'ol* both designated a great pit of darkness and dust under the earth that was not a hell (in the sense of any implication of judgment), but simply an abode for the unfortunate dead. Vedic thought in India, particularly as elaborated in the descriptions of Yama and the fathers of heaven in the *Rgveda*, was concerned primarily with the positive fate of those who performed sacrifices and good works, the rest passing into the oblivion of nonexistence. With the introduction of the importance of knowledge over sacrifice, of *karmayoga* (liberation through works) in place of ritual performance, the kingdom of Yama was elaborated into a series of heavens, and Yama himself was gradually transformed into a judge of the dead and then a god of the underworld hells, which were correspondingly enumerated.

The greatly elaborated heavens and hells, as they came to be developed in Hindu and Buddhist thought, with their graphic descriptions of the tortures of punishment and the raptures of reward, are by nature temporary (or, at least, one's stay in them is temporary). For the Buddhist, even these abodes are part of the conditioned world of *saṃsāra* and thus by definition are ultimately unreal, as all of phenomenal existence is unreal. In any case, one is reborn from these states or conditions into another state or condition, with the understanding that not until one is reborn as a human being will final release be possible.

Quite different is the basic understanding of prophetic religions, which assumes that the eschaton and judgment result in the eternality of the final abode and resting place. The question of whether or not punishment, like reward, is eternal has long perplexed theologians. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, as well as in Islam, God's justice is always understood as tempered with

mercy, and the idea of the eternality of hell has been moderated to whatever extent has seemed consistent with the prevailing theological climate.

The Intermediate State. Throughout the prophetic religions it has been necessary to conceive of a kind of intermediate state or place for souls before the time of final disposition. (The very temporariness of one's stay in the Hindu and Buddhist heavens and hells suggests that they fulfill the same sort of intermediate function.) This intermediate state can be a condition of waiting, often in a specified place, for the time of final judgment. Thus, Islamic tradition developed elaborate descriptions of the *barzakh* (lit., "barrier") as a place or condition in which both good and wicked souls dwell until the day of resurrection. In later Jewish tradition, *She'ol* came to refer to a temporary place for men and women to await judgment.

In another understanding, this intermediate position is often described as being for those for whom consignment to punishment or reward is not automatic. The Qur'anic *a'rāf* ("heights"), for example, has been interpreted as the temporary abode of those whose good and evil deeds more or less balance. Christianity, in some of its forms, has elaborated the distinction between Purgatory, as a place of temporary punishment and purification, and Limbo, as a waiting state where persons such as the righteous heathen and unbaptized infants are kept.

Literal and Symbolic Interpretations. Common to many religious traditions is continuing debate as to the nature of the future abodes of punishment and reward. Are they to be understood as places of literal recompense or as representations of states of mind? If states, are they attainable now or only in the hereafter? Are the experiences that one has in these states or places real or imaginary? Or, in a rather different dimension, are the descriptions to be seen only as allegorical and not, in fact, indicative of what is actually going to happen either objectively or subjectively?

It is in this area, perhaps, that it is most difficult to generalize within traditions. The awe- and terror-inspiring vision may well be taken with absolute literalness by one believer, while another might see that such visions are only symbolic representations of internal rather than external recompense. The Tibetan *Book of the Dead*, a set of instructions for the dying and dead that is at the same time a description of the forty-nine-day period between death and rebirth, details the experience that the soul has with karmic apparitions in the form of peaceful and wrathful deities. The great insight that comes of the *bardo*, or intermediate state experience, is that not only are the apparitions the products of one's own mind but they also assume, for the

purposes of instruction, a concrete and objective reality.

Despite the variations in conceptions of what the afterlife may entail, a belief that human beings will continue to exist in some form after the experience we term death is a universal phenomenon. Skeptics have never persuaded the body of believers, whatever the specifics of their faith, that with the demise of the physical body comes the extinction of the human essence. Most people through the ages have drawn a clear connection between the quality of life lived on this earth and the expectation of what will come after death. Contemporary researchers of near-death experiences claim that we now have the beginnings of a scientific proof of the afterlife in the apparent commonality of the experiences of those proclaimed clinically dead. For most persons of faith, however, such knowledge is part of a universal mystery that by definition is veiled from the eyes of the living. We have some assurances of faith, but the details of what awaits us in "the undiscover'd country from whose bourn no traveller returns" (Shakespeare, *Hamlet* 3.1) can only be anticipated, with the certainty that such knowledge will eventually, and inevitably, be ours.

[*See also* Soul *and* Immortality; *for more detailed discussions of themes of afterlife, see* Judgment of the Dead *and* Heaven and Hell.]

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JANE I. SMITH

Geographies of Death

Belief in some kind of existence after death is one of the more common elements of religion, as history and anthropology show. While death is everywhere recognized as inevitable, it is seldom accepted as an absolute termination of human existence. Beliefs concerning the actual conditions of life after death, however, vary widely from culture to culture. This article will examine the variety of ways in which these afterlife conditions are represented, focusing in particular on their geography.

Afterlife in General. The different representations of life after death that we find in different religions are related to their respective conceptions of the structure of the cosmos and of life on earth, and to their different beliefs about the bodily and spiritual constitution of man. The Egyptians, for example, being agriculturalists, looked forward to a future life in the bountiful "Earu fields," whereas the Indians of the North American Plains, who were hunters, looked forward to the "eternal hunting grounds." In each case the actual economic conditions of life play an important role in determining how one will conceive of the afterlife. Similarly,

the location and geography of the abode of the dead is in most cultures determined by the actual geographical conditions of their present world. Only occasionally is it determined primarily by cultural factors, as for instance by the traditions of migration among a number of Polynesian religions.

The conception of the soul is also an important factor. A soul that is conceived to be eternal and spiritual leads a different type of afterlife than one that is conceived as the double of the earthly body, or as something that gradually dwindles into nothingness after death, such as we find among certain northern Eurasian religions. A belief in multiple souls within a single individual makes possible a belief in the multiple destinations of these souls. Of the five souls of the Shipape (South America), for instance, only one goes to the hereafter.

There are also marked differences in the degree of interest that particular religions display in the afterlife. While central in one religion, it may be peripheral in another. Christianity, for example, along with a small number of other religions, has made the immortality of the individual central to its system of beliefs. But this centrality of the individual is by no means universally recognized. In many other religions the continuity of life after the death of the individual is of slight interest, because the stress falls firmly on life on earth. The continued existence of man after death may not be wholly denied, but neither is it considered to be of any importance. Thoughts about the conditions of the afterlife remain vague. Thus Godfrey Lienhardt quotes an Anuak man (Upper Nile) as saying simply that no one knows where the dead are, since no one has ever seen them. The inhabitants of Bellona Island (near the Solomons) seem equally unconcerned with what might happen to them after death. In accordance with this lack of interest we find cultures that not only allow the conditions of existence in the land of the dead to remain unclear, but even leave the question of its location unanswered. Rupert M. Downes has found this to be the case among the Tiv of Nigeria, for instance, where ideas about a future state remain nebulous. By contrast, some cultures develop extremely detailed descriptions of the realm of the dead. Here one thinks in particular of medieval Christianity.

Although today we tend to be conditioned to see life after death as an eternal state befitting an immortal soul, it is of some importance to make clear that there are also cultures in which the afterlife is considered to be a temporary prolongation of the present life, to be brought to an end by a second and final death. The Pangwe (southern Cameroon) believe that after death a man lives on for a long time in heaven, but in the end

he dies and his corpse is thrown out with no hope of any further existence. The Egyptians too knew the fear of dying for a second time in the hereafter.

The manner of life after death is also closely related to the moral principles of selection for entrance into the country of the dead. In some cases such special principles of selection may be absent. In such a case, the implicit criteria are essentially social, all duly initiated adult members of a community sharing the same destiny. Children and slaves (where these exist) are often excluded. Exceptions exist of course. Among the Apapocúva-Guaraní (South America) dead children go to the "country without evil." About women the opinions vary. Islam, for example, originally excluded women from the heavenly paradise, arguing that women had no immortal soul. In fact, the idea of moral retribution after death is absent from a great number of religions.

Where the conception of reward or punishment according to ethical principles does occur, it is necessary to divide the abode of the dead into two or more sections that may be localized in different places: heaven(s) and hell(s), and in some instances a place in between where souls are purified before they are allowed to enter heaven: purgatory. This may be combined with the belief in reincarnation, as in Buddhism, such that neither heaven nor hell is eternal, the latter becoming a kind of purgatory and the former only a temporary state of conditioned bliss. In cultures where a belief in reincarnation is accepted, the question of the place of a soul's rebirth is understandably of no great importance and the ideas concerning it often remain vague or contradictory.

The distance between the world of the living and the abode of the dead may give rise to the conception of a journey from the one to the other. The Inuit (Eskimo) speak of the road the dead must follow, which seems to be identical with the Milky Way. The Tibetan *Book of the Dead* serves as a guide for the soul on the difficult and dangerous journey to the hereafter and offers detailed "geographical" instructions. The world of the departed may be separated from that of the living by a river (like the Styx in Greece), which must be traversed by boat, or may be crossed by means of a bridge, as the Parsis believe.

Generally the country of the dead is represented more or less as a copy of the world of the living, and life there follows in the main the same lines as life on earth. In these cases it is difficult to speak of a "geography" of death, which would be distinct from the geography of the living. An extreme example of this is the idea which the Admiralty Islanders on Manus (near New Guinea) have developed. In Manus, personality survives death in

all respects, at least for a time. A man's property remains his own and even his profession, if he has one, remains unchanged. Reo F. Fortune reports in his book *Manus Religion* that if the deceased was a member of the native constabulary appointed by the Australian administration, he remains a policeman among the ghosts after death. There he receives the periodic visits of a ghostly white district officer of a ghostly white administration and collects the ghostly taxes paid by his fellow ghosts. It is clear that in this case the conception of the country of the dead is an exact double of the land of the living. The living and the dead coexist in space, having only different modes of being. Here it is hardly possible to speak of a distinct geography of death. Although this is perhaps an extreme example, many cases exist in which the dwelling places of the dead are considered to be in the immediate neighborhood of those of the living.

The Greek settlers in southern Italy considered some wild and eerie regions as parts of the underworld existing on the surface of the earth. "Lake without birds" was an appelation of the underworld, Avernus. The *facilis descensus Averno* of which the Roman poet Vergil speaks could be located next to one's own home. Even when the hereafter is conceived as a mirror image of the world of the living, the difference is not as great as it may seem. Things may be reversed, left and right, up and down, the cycle of the seasons may have changed places, but the general principles remain the same.

Where the dead are thought to remain present in the place where they are buried (the conception of the "living corpse"), a special country of the dead may be absent, or at least unimportant. The same is true when the dead are thought to change into animals living in their natural habitat. Nevertheless, the dead always remain separated from the living, at least by their different mode of being, whether or not they are further separated by the location of the realm of which they have become inhabitants. When we find the belief that human beings after death will be reunited again with the cosmos—often considered as divine—there is a transformation in the mode of being, but the question of a geography of the dead does not properly arise. This is the case, for instance, in the Indian concept of *ātman*, the self, which returns after death to *brahman*. Where the final destination of man is conceived negatively, as in the Buddhist *nirvāṇa*, any attempt to "locate" this final state falls under the same negative strictures.

Geographies of Death. In those cases where there is the elaboration of a distinct geography of death, there appear to be three main possibilities, each with minor variations. The world of the dead may be on earth, under the earth, or in heaven. Numerous examples can be given of each.

In the first case, the world of the dead is situated on earth, but at a lesser or greater distance away from the dwellings of the living. The Trobriand Islanders (New Guinea) situate the village of the dead in the direct neighborhood of their own villages. The Celtic Tirnanog is an island in the far west on the other side of the immense ocean. According to the Tasmanians (Australia) the dead travel to an island nearby where they continue their existence; in parts of the Northern Territory (Australia) the island of the dead is situated far off in the direction of the Morning Star. According to the Ewe (Togo) the country of the dead lies a long way off from that of the living on the far side of a river, and the journey to arrive there is difficult and dangerous. We also frequently find peoples having traditions of migration, and here in many cases the abode of the departed is identified with the people's original home, described in myth. Starting from Southeast Asia, we find all over the Pacific variations of the name *Java*, not only as the actual island of the living, but also as the mythic island of the dead. This "principle of return," as it has been called, often appears in the orientation of the corpse at burial that is based on the idea of the return to the country of origin.

In the second case, the realm of the dead is situated beneath the earth or under the water. The idea of an underworld as the dwelling place of the departed is probably the commonest of all concepts in this sphere. The idea of an entrance to this region through a deep hole in the ground or a cave is also widespread. The Hopi (North America) locate the village of the dead, Kotluwalawa, in the depth of a lake called "Whispering Water." When located beneath the earth, the world of the dead is usually conceived as either a realm of shadowy figures or shades, as in the case of the Israelite She'ol and the Greek Hades, or as a place of punishment. On Bellona Island, for instance, the dead are believed to live in darkness under the ground, whereas the living inhabit the world of light on the earth. The Babylonian realm of the dead, the "country of no return," is pictured in the myth of Ishtar's descent to hell in similar terms:

> The house of darkness,
> The house the inhabitants of which lack light,
> The place where dust is their food
>   and excrements their nourishments,
> Where they see no light and live in darkness.

The specification of the underworld as a place of punishment is closely connected with the more general phenomenon of the differentiation of destinies after death. As noted briefly above, a number of cultures believe in

such a differentiation. We may distinguish two main types: one based on the principle of social or ritual status, and one according to ethical principles. Where the main criterion at first appears to be a kind of knowledge, closer inspection reveals that this type is best understood as a subdivision of the first social or ritual one. In the first type, illustrated for instance by the Delaware and Algonquin (North America), there exists a concept of a different destiny after death for different social or ritual groups. The fate of those lacking such status remains open. They are simply excluded from the regular abode of the dead without further thought being given to the problem of where and how they continue their existence.

The most common type of differentiation, however, is based upon ethical principles, which are employed to separate those who are to be rewarded after death from those who are to be punished. Along with this notion of postmortem punishment comes the notion of hell and purgatory as the locations where such punishments take place. While it is true that not all subterranean abodes of the dead are hells, it does seem to be the case that all hells are understood to be subterranean. Realms of darkness beneath the earth beyond the reach of sun and moon, they are illuminated solely by the flames that punish the damned.

In the final case, the world of the dead may be situated in heavenly spheres. This concept is also a very common one. We find it, for instance, in Egypt as one of several ideas concerning the location of the hereafter. The belief that this country is to be sought somewhere high in the mountains is only a variation, since in many religions mountaintops symbolize heaven and the dwelling place of the gods, as, for example, Olympus did in Greece. The Dusun (North Kalimantan, Borneo) situate the abode of the dead on a high mountain. Another variation is the belief that the dead continue their existence on or among the stars.

The heavenly country of the dead is often represented as a more or less idealized replica of that of the living. The Ngaju Dayak (South Kalimantan, Borneo), for example, go to Lewu Liau after death, a village of spirits situated in a lovely and fertile country, near a river full of fish and with woods filled with game nearby. Everything that is found on earth is found there too, but it is a better world where such things as criminality are unknown. We also encounter profane versions of such heavenly paradises, such as the land of Cocagne, mentioned in fairy tales and usually located in heavenly spheres.

Multiple Geographies: The Example of Ancient Egypt. Ancient Egypt offers us an example of a multiple geography of death, combining in a single religion many of the different types we have mentioned above. Although there is no reason to think that the culture of Egypt was an especially somber one, it is true that its preoccupation with death and afterlife was great. Although the Egyptians believed in a judgment of the dead by Osiris, the god of the underworld, there seems to have been no concept of hell. Those souls that could not pass the divine judgment were destined to be eaten by Ammit, "she who devours." Egypt also knew the idea of a second and definitive death in the hereafter. The *Book of Going Forth by Day* in fact relates a myth according to which the entire world will in the end return to its primal state prior to creation, to a state of chaos or nothingness.

Egyptian religion is of particular interest because of the multiple ways in which it conceived of the hereafter, called in Egyptian Duat, the zone of twilight, or heaven by night. Five distinct conceptions may be mentioned.

First, the Egyptians recognized a country of the dead, named Amentet, the West. More exactly, this term applies to the western frontier of the fertile land, the edge of the desert where the necropolises were located. The idea of the dead who live on in the grave and graveyard was also known. The realm of the dead is at times situated beneath the earth, which it more or less duplicates, and at other times it is pictured as a system of caves and passages. In both of these cases, the dead living there are believed to be visited by the sun at night. Then there are the "Earu fields," conceived as a heavenly copy of the land of Egypt, complete with a heavenly Nile, yet superior to earth in every way. Finally, the country of the dead may be located in heaven among the stars, especially in the north among the circumpolar stars, which the Egyptians called the "stars that never die."

[*See also* Underworld; Otherworld; *and* Heaven and Hell.]

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Jewish Concepts

The concept of an afterlife in Judaism took shape gradually and was rarely cast into dogmatic or systematic form. The Jewish idea of the afterlife has focused upon belief in either corporeal resurrection or the immortality of the soul. While one or the other of these conceptions, and occasionally both together, has been present in every period in the history of Judaism, it can safely be said that these ideas underwent their most significant development during the rabbinic and medieval periods.

The Biblical Period. The notion of the afterlife in the Bible is decidedly vague. After death, the individual is described as going to She'ol, a kind of netherworld, from which he "will not ascend" (*Jb.* 7:9). God, however, is attributed with the power to revive the dead (*Dt.* 32:39, *1 Sm.* 2:6), and the language of resurrection is several times used in a figurative sense, as in Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones (*Ez.* 37:1-4) and in the apocalypse of Isaiah (*Is.* 26:17-19) to describe the national restoration of the people of Israel. The earliest description of an eschatological resurrection of the dead is in *Daniel* 12:1-2, an apocalyptic text composed in the midst of the Antiochian persecutions (167-164 BCE):

> There shall be a time of trouble . . . ; and at that time your people shall be delivered, every one whose name shall be found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

These verses probably do not imply a universal resurrection for all men but only for the righteous and the wicked of Israel. As some modern scholars have proposed, it is likely that the prominence the idea of resurrection began to assume in this period was a result of political and religious crises in which significant num-

bers of Jews suffered martyrdom. In order to maintain belief in God's justice and in his promises to the righteous that they would enjoy the restoration of Israel, it became necessary to extend the doctrine of reward and punishment beyond this life to the hereafter. (For an explicit statement of this rationale, see *2 Maccabees* 12:42-45.)

The Hellenistic Age. The term *'olam ha-ba'* ("the world to come"), in contrast to *'olam ha-zeh* ("this world"), first appears in the Hebrew *Apocalypse of Enoch* (71:15), a work composed between 164 and 105 BCE, and throughout the Hellenistic period notions of an eschatological judgment and resurrection in the apocalyptic tradition begun with the *Book of Daniel* continued to develop in Palestinian Jewish literature. To be distinguished from this eschatological tradition is the conception of the immortality of the soul that was introduced into Diaspora Judaism under the influence of Greco-Roman culture. George Foot Moore succinctly characterized the difference between the two ideas of the afterlife:

> on the one side [i.e., immortality] the dualism of body and soul, on the other [i.e., resurrection] the unity of man, soul and body. To the one the final liberation of the soul from the body, its prison-house or sepulchre, was the very meaning and worth of immortality; to the other the reunion of soul and body to live again in the completeness of man's nature.
> (Moore, 1927, p. 295)

The idea of immortality initially appears in Hellenistic Jewish literature in the *Wisdom of Solomon* (3:1-10, 5:15-16) and is more extensively developed in the writings of Philo Judaeus (d. 45-50 CE), who describes how the souls of the righteous return after death to their native home in heaven—or, in the case of rare individuals like the patriarchs, to the intelligible world of the ideas (*Allegorical Interpretation* 1.105-108; *On Sacrifice* 2.5). Although Philo's views were immensely influential in early Christian philosophy, they had no impact upon rabbinic Jewish thought as it developed in the subsequent centuries.

Rabbinic Judaism. Belief in the resurrection of the dead is the cornerstone of rabbinic eschatology. Josephus Flavius (*Jewish Antiquities* 18.13-18; *The Jewish War* 2.154-165) and the *Acts of the Apostles* (23:6-9) both attribute such belief to the Pharisees, the rabbis' predecessors before 70 CE, and in one of the few dogmatic statements about the afterlife that exist in all rabbinic literature, the Mishnah explicitly states: "All Israel has a portion in the world-to-come" except "one who says, 'There is no resurrection of the dead'" (*San.* 10.1).

Rabbinic doctrine concerning reward and punish-

ment in the hereafter is based upon belief in the reunion of the body and the soul before judgment. Although rabbinic thought was eventually influenced by Greco-Roman ideas about the existence of the soul as an independent entity, and although there exist some relatively late rabbinic opinions that attach greater culpability to the soul than to the body for a person's sins, there are no rabbinic sources that testify to belief in the immortality of the soul independent of the notion of corporeal resurrection. The unqualified importance that the latter article of faith held for the rabbis is reflected in the great exegetical efforts they made to find sources for it in the Torah (cf. *Sifrei Dt.*, ed. L. Finkelstein, Berlin, 1939, no. 306, p. 341) and in the many references to resurrection that are found in the Targums. As testimony to God's faithfulness, the rabbis also made his power to revive the dead the subject of the second benediction in the 'Amidah, the centerpiece of the Jewish liturgy, and they included several references to the resurrection in other prayers in the liturgy.

Aside from the dogma of resurrection, however, the rabbis held differing opinions about nearly every matter connected to the afterlife. In regard to retribution in the hereafter, the first-century houses of Hillel and Shammai agreed about the reward the righteous will receive and the punishment the wicked will suffer, but they disagreed about the fate of most men who are neither wholly righteous nor utterly wicked. According to the house of Shammai, the souls of these men will be immersed in purgatorial fires until they are purified; according to the house of Hillel, God in his mercy will spare them all punishment (Tosefta, *San.* 13.3). In a lengthy Talmudic discussion, some authorities propose that upon death the souls of the righteous are gathered in "a treasury beneath the throne of glory" or, alternatively, are given habitation in paradise, while the souls of the wicked are imprisoned and cast back and forth from the slings of destructive angels until they are cleansed of their sins. Still another opinion states that the soul lingers with the body even after death, "lamenting all seven days of mourning," and for the following year it ascends and descends, unable to relinquish completely its ties with the body (B.T., *Shab.* 152a–b). Other sources attribute varying degrees of consciousness to the dead (B.T., *Ber.* 18b–19a).

On such questions as whether gentiles or the children of wicked gentiles can enjoy a place in the world to come, second- and third-century rabbis disagreed (Tosefta, *San.* 13.1); the law was decided in the affirmative (see Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*, Repentance 3.5).

Some rabbinic views about the afterlife reflect beliefs commonly held in the ancient world. While the rabbis stated unequivocally that every Israelite has a place in the world to come, they also believed that persons who suffered violent or otherwise untimely deaths might not be permitted to enjoy the afterlife. The rabbis did not, however, accept the pagan belief that the unburied are refused entrance to the hereafter. While there exist a number of cases in rabbinic literature in which life after death is promised in return for a pious deed, these are relatively exceptional. A statement like the one attributed to the tanna Me'ir (second century), in which he is reported to have vouchsafed a place in the world to come to any person who lives in the Land of Israel, speaks Hebrew, and recites the Shema' prayer daily (*Sifrei Dt.*, no. 333, p. 383), should be understood partly as a rhetorical expression meant to emphasize the importance of the deeds Me'ir encourages.

In general, the subject of the future world does not appear to have obsessed the rabbis or especially to have exercised their imaginations. While there must have existed among Jews many folk beliefs concerning life after death (some of which can be extrapolated from burial customs), few have been explicitly recorded. A striking exception is the view that the body will be resurrected from the *luz*, an almond-shaped bone at the top of the spine that otherwise will turn into a snake (*Gn. Rab.* 28.3). About the ecstatic pleasures or harrowing tortures awaiting the dead, rabbinic speculations were decidedly restrained. Gan 'Eden (the garden of Eden), the rabbinic equivalent of paradise, is sometimes described as an earthly garden; at other times, as a heavenly one. Geihinnom (Gehenna), the equivalent of hell, derives its name from the valley of Ben Hinnom south of Jerusalem in which, during the time of the biblical monarchy, a pagan cult of child sacrifice was conducted, thus endowing the valley with everlasting infamy. The exact location of the eschatological Geihinnom, however, was the subject of differing opinions: some rabbis locate it in the depths of the earth (B.T., *'Eruv.* 19a), others in the heavens or beyond the "mountains of darkness" (B.T., *Tam.* 32b); and there is even an isolated opinion that altogether denies the existence of Geihinnom as a place, defining it instead as a self-consuming fire that emerges from the bodies of the wicked and destroys them.

The reticence of rabbinic tradition about these subjects is summed up in a statement of the third-century Palestinian sage Yoḥanan bar Nappaḥa': "All the prophets prophesied only about the days of the Messiah; but of the world to come, 'eye hath not seen it, O God' [*Is.* 64:4]" (B.T., *San.* 99a, *Ber.* 34b). Yoḥanan's Babylonian contemporary Rav (Abba' bar Ayyvu) gives a more detailed description of what, at the least, will not be in the hereafter: "In the world to come, there is no eating, no drinking, no begetting of children, no bargaining or

hatred or jealousy or strife; rather, the righteous will sit with crowns on their heads and enjoy the effulgence of the *shekhinah*, God's presence" (B.T., *Ber.* 17a). The rabbis usually imagined the world to come as the complete realization of all the ideals they valued most in this world. Thus, the Sabbath is once characterized as one-sixtieth of the world to come (B.T., *Ber.* 57b), and the late rabbinic *midrash Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* records the opinion that in the hereafter there will be no sin or transgression, and all will occupy themselves with the study of Torah. The *Midrash Eleh Ezkerah* (Legend of the Ten Martyrs) concludes with a vivid description of the future world in which the purified souls of all the righteous are said to sit in the heavenly academy on golden thrones and to listen to 'Aqiva' ben Yosef preach on the matters of the day.

The Middle Ages. Between the eighth century and the fifteenth, Jewish views about the afterlife embraced virtually every position on the spectrum of conceivable beliefs, including extreme philosophical interpretations that altogether deny the existence of corporeal resurrection. The Spanish-Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides (Mosheh ben Maimon, 1135/8–1204), in his *Commentary on the Mishnah*, criticizes several popular views of the world to come, all of which conceive of the eschatological bliss purely in material and sensual terms. German-Jewish pietistic literature of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries records numerous accounts of encounters with dead souls, visits to the otherworld, *danses macabres*, and other folk beliefs that were, to some degree, judaized or otherwise rationalized. It is, however, in the literature of Jewish philosophy and Qabbalah (mysticism) that the most significant developments in Jewish eschatological thinking in the Middle Ages are to be found.

Philosophical approaches. Most medieval Jewish philosophers conceived of the afterlife in terms of the immortality of the soul, which they then defined according to their individual philosophical views. For many of these philosophers, the notion of physical resurrection in the future world is clearly problematic, and although few dared to deny its status as a fundamental dogma of Jewish faith, they sometimes had to go to extreme lengths to reconcile it with their other ideas about existence in the hereafter.

Probably the most successful in doing this was the early medieval Babylonian philosopher and sage Sa'adyah Gaon (882–942), who, in *The Book of Beliefs and Opinions*, emphasizes the unity of body and soul. Sa'adyah foresees two resurrections, the first for the righteous alone at the beginning of the messianic age (when the wicked would be sufficiently punished by being left unresurrected) and the second for everyone

else at the advent of the world to come. At this latter time, the wicked will be resurrected in order to be condemned to eternal suffering, while the righteous will pass into the future world, where they will enjoy a purely spiritual existence, sustained in bliss by a fine, luminous substance that will simultaneously serve as the instrument by which the wicked will be burned forever in punishment (Sa'adyah, *Beliefs and Opinions* 6.1, 6.7, 7.13).

After Sa'adyah, the eschatological doctrines of most Jewish philosophers can be categorized by their orientation as either Neoplatonic or Aristotelian. For Jewish Neoplatonists—including Yitshaq Yisra'eli (d. 955/6), Shelomoh ibn Gabirol (d. 1058), Bahye ibn Paquda (eleventh century), and Yehudah ha-Levi (d. 1141)—beatitude in the world to come was understood as the climax of the soul's ascent toward the godhead and its union with Wisdom. Some writers speak of this state of bliss as a divine gift; according to certain views, it can be attained even in this world if the philosopher can free himself from the influence of the flesh in order to devote his soul entirely to the pursuit of the knowledge of God.

In contrast, Jewish Aristotelian philosophers treated the soul as the acquired intellect and therefore defined the ultimate felicity as a state of "conjunction" between the acquired intellect of the individual philosopher and the universal Active Intellect. Immortality was understood by them mainly as the intellectual contemplation of God. Like their Muslim counterparts, the Jewish Aristotelians disagreed over such issues as whether this state of conjunction can be attained in this world or solely in the next and whether the soul in its immortal state will preserve its individual identity or lose it in the collective unity of the impersonal Active Intellect.

Maimonides, the most celebrated Jewish Aristotelian, appears to adapt conflicting opinions on these questions (*Guide of the Perplexed* 1.74 and 3.54). Although he lists the dogma of resurrection as the thirteenth fundamental of Jewish faith, he also writes that "in the world to come the body and the flesh do not exist but only the souls of the righteous alone" (*Code of Law: Repentance* 3.6). In Maimonides' own lifetime, this extreme formulation elicited much criticism and was sometimes interpreted as denying corporeal resurrection. To defend himself, Maimonides eventually wrote his *Treatise on Resurrection*, in which he distinguishes between existence in the messianic age and in the world to come. In the former, "those persons whose souls will return to their bodies will eat, drink, marry, and procreate, and then die after enjoying long lives like those characteristic of the messianic age"; in the world to come, the souls alone of the previously resurrected persons will be

restored, and they will now enjoy eternal and purely spiritual existence. Maimonides' distinction between the two periods is unique, however; in fact, the notion of corporeal resurrection so poorly fits his general philosophy, with its overall emphasis upon the purely spiritual nature of true bliss, that some modern scholars have questioned whether Maimonides' repeated affirmations of dogmatic belief in resurrection were solely concessions to tradition and popular sentiment, motivated perhaps by fear of being persecuted for heresy.

A very different criticism of the Maimonidean position was put forward in the fourteenth century by the philosopher Hasdai Crescas in *The Light of the Lord*. Crescas criticizes Maimonides' intellectualism and proposes that salvation comes to the soul through love of God (2.6, 3.3). A century later, Yosef Albo (d. 1444) accepted the Maimonidean chronology for the afterlife but also argued with his predecessor's intellectualism, claiming that practice, not just knowledge, of God's service makes the soul immortal (*Book of Principles* 4.29–30). Still more revealing as to the changes in Jewish eschatology that occurred over the centuries is Albo's characterization of resurrection as a "dogma accepted by our nation," but not "a fundamental or a derivative principle of divine law in general or of the law of Moses in particular" (1.23).

Qabbalistic views. Unlike medieval Jewish philosophers, Jewish mystics in the Middle Ages had no difficulty with the concept of resurrection or other such aspects of eschatological doctrine. Quite the opposite, these topics were among their favorites. In voluminous writings, the mystics described the fate of the resurrected souls, imagined the precise details of their existence in the afterlife, and charted its chronology in relation to the *sefirot*, or divine emanations.

The Spanish exegete Moses Nahmanides (Mosheh ben Nahman, c. 1194–1270) devotes considerable effort in the *Gate of the Reward* to reconciling a mystical view of the afterlife with Maimonidean eschatology. Nahmanides posits the existence of three distinct worlds that follow this one: (1) a world of souls, roughly equivalent to the rabbinic Gan 'Eden and Geihinnom, which the soul enters immediately after death to be rewarded or punished; (2) a future world that is synonymous with the messianic age and will culminate in a final judgment and resurrection; and (3) the world to come, in which "the body will become like the soul and the soul will be cleaving to knowledge of the Most High."

A second stage in the history of qabbalistic eschatology began with the appearance of the *Zohar* (completed in approximately 1300), which describes the afterlife in terms of the separate fates of the three parts of the soul, the *nefesh*, the *ruah*, and the *neshamah*. Since only the

first two were considered to be susceptible to sin, they alone were subject to punishment. The *neshamah* in its unsullied state was believed to be stored up after death in a special place, often called the *tseror ha-hayyim*, "the bundle of life" (a term borrowed from *1 Samuel* 25:29), which was sometimes identified with one of the *sefirot*. Because the doctrine of the preexistence of the soul was also widely accepted in these qabbalistic circles, the soul's final sojourn among the *sefirot* could be seen as simply a return to its birthplace.

Probably the most unusual aspect of qabbalistic eschatology is the belief in *gilgul*, or metempsychosis, the transmigration of souls after death. This belief gained increasing prominence in qabbalistic thought from the thirteenth century onward. Originally considered a unique punishment for extraordinary sins (particularly of a sexual kind), *gilgul* came to be viewed, paradoxically, as an exemplary instance of God's mercy, since the chance to be reborn gave its victims an opportunity to correct their sins and thus restore themselves as spiritual beings. As a form of punishment, however, the concept of *gilgul* conflicted with the idea of Geihinnom—a conflict that was never successfully resolved—and in later Qabbalah, the notion of *gilgul* gradually became a principle wherein everything in the world, from inorganic matter to the angels, was believed to be in a state of constant flux and metamorphosis. Thus, in order to repair the damage they had done in their earlier existence, certain souls were supposed to have been reincarnated at later moments in history that were similar to those in which they had first lived; accordingly, David, Bathsheba, and Uriah were considered to be the *gilgulim* of Adam, Eve, and the serpent; Moses and Jethro, those of Cain and Abel. In the later Middle Ages, the notion of transmigration was eventually absorbed into folk belief. By the sixteenth century, the *dibbuq* (dybbuk), which originally was simply the name for a demon, had come to represent a soul whose sins were so enormous that they could not be repaired even through *gilgul*. The poor soul consequently wandered through the world in desperate search of refuge in helpless living persons, whom it subsequently possessed and tormented.

The Modern Period. With the change in religious temper that occurred during the Enlightenment and has deepened since then, the problem of the afterlife has lost much of its compelling urgency for Jewish theology. Orthodox Judaism, to be sure, maintains the rabbinic dogmatic belief in resurrection as part of its conception of the messianic age, and it similarly preserves the liturgical references in their original form. In contrast, the Pittsburgh Platform (1885) of the Reform movement in America expressly rejected "as ideas not rooted

in Judaism the beliefs both in bodily resurrection, and in Gehenna and Eden as abodes for eternal punishment and reward." In general, when the afterlife is considered today, it is usually spoken about in terms of personal immortality, a heritage of the medieval philosophical temper, and as good an indication as any of the *gilgulim* through which the concept has passed in the course of Jewish history.

[*For discussion of the afterlife in German-Jewish pietistic literature of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see* Ashkenazic Hasidism. *See also* Messianism, *article on* Jewish Messianism.]

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For early rabbinic eschatology, the clearest and most comprehensive treatment remains George Foot Moore's *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, the Age of Tannaim*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1927–1930). Volume 2 contains (on pages 279–395) a useful discussion of the methodological problems involved in the study of rabbinic concepts of the afterlife and their historical background as well as translations of most of the relevant sources. An indispensable complement to Moore's summary, particularly for Greco-Roman parallels to the rabbinic concepts, is Saul Lieberman's "Some Aspects of After Life in Early Rabbinic Literature," in *Harry Austryn Wolfson Jubilee Volume* (English Section), vol. 2 (Jerusalem, 1965). For other special aspects of rabbinic eschatology, see Arthur Marmorstein's two essays on the afterlife in his *Studies in Jewish Theology* (London, 1950) and Martha Himmelfarb's *Tours of Hell: An Apocalyptic Form in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Philadelphia, 1983).

On medieval philosophical views, the single book to attempt a comprehensive survey is Julius Guttmann's *Philosophies of Judaism: The History of Jewish Philosophy from Biblical Times to Franz Rosenzweig*, translated by David W. Silverman (New York, 1964), in which see the index, s.v. *Afterlife*. Moses Maimonides' *Treatise on Resurrection* has now been translated into English by Fred Rosner (New York, 1982), and selected essays dealing with Maimonidean eschatology and its repercussions have been helpfully collected and edited by Jacob Dienstag in *Eschatology in Maimonidean Thought: Messianism, Resurrection, and the World to Come* (New York, 1983), which also contains a bibliography.

On qabbalistic views of the afterlife, the most important discussions are those of Gershom Scholem in *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 3d ed. (New York, 1961), and *Kabbalah* (New York, 1973). For folk beliefs concerning life after death, see Joshua Trachtenberg's *Jewish Magic and Superstition* (1939; reprint, New York, 1982), pp. 61–68.

DAVID STERN

Chinese Concepts

[*This article is devoted exclusively to pre-Buddhist notions of the afterlife. For a discussion of later developments, see* Chinese Religion, *overview article.*]

The fundamentally this-worldly orientation of ancient Chinese culture placed the world of the dead inside the universe—in the stars, in distant realms on earth, or under the earth. Death was seen not as the separation of two radically different entities like matter and spirit but as the dispersal of a multiplicity of forces (*ch'i*, "breaths"), forces that were graded but basically formed one continuous spectrum. This view accounts for the early, intense, and elaborate search for techniques to attain physical immortality, and also accounts for the vague and fluid boundary between this world and a never radically different hereafter that characterizes all Chinese religion.

Shang Royal Ancestors. The people of the Shang period (late second millennium BCE) were in constant communication with the afterworld, that is, with the deceased members of their royal family, whom they consulted through oracles. Many of the records of these oracles, inscribed on bone or tortoiseshell, have been excavated and deciphered. They show that practically all the events of life—illness, misfortune, or defeat, as well as good harvests and victory—were ascribed to the influence of the ancestors' spirits. No description is given of the realm where the dead existed, but evidence of human sacrifices and the elaborate furnishings found in Shang royal tombs suggest that the dead were thought to exist in a style similar to the living, needing servants and possessions. Dogs interred in a pit below the coffin might have had the task of guiding the deceased to the land of the dead, a role later assumed by mythical animals such as dragons.

Man's Two Souls. Under the reign of the Chou kings (eleventh century–256 BCE) a cult arose dedicated to the deity Heaven (T'ien), an anthropomorphous celestial emperor whose court was composed of the souls of deceased nobles. [*See* T'ien.] The royal family and the families of feudal lords had ancestral temples in which the souls (*hun*) of their ancestors received a cult with offerings, to assure both their welfare in the hereafter and the prosperity of their descendants. According to the classical theory that originated in the early Chou (attested in the *Tso chuan* entry for Duke Chao, 7th year), every member of the aristocracy had two souls, which part company at the moment of death. The *hun* "soul,"

a spiritual and intelligent personality categorized as *yang*, goes to join the court of Heaven; a more physical vital breath, the *p'o* "soul," of *yin* character, follows the body into the grave or descends to Huang Ch'üan (Yellow Springs), a netherworld under the earth. Elaborate funerals, tomb furnishings, and sacrifices at the tomb were provided to assure the contentment of the *p'o* energy under the earth lest it trouble the family as a malevolent demonic revenant *(kuei)*. The first rite after death was the Chao-hun ("summoning back of the *hun* spirit"). A rite that shows traces of early shamanistic practices, it might also have been practiced for the severely ill, whose souls were thought to stray. A poem, *Chao-hun* (c. 240 BCE), in the early anthology *Ch'u tz'u* (Songs of the South) describes to the wandering soul the pleasures it has left behind and the dangers lurking on its way into the other world. Once this rite has proved ineffective, the funeral takes place, and the *hun* spirit is fixed in a tablet that becomes the object of the ancestral cult.

This system of beliefs and mortuary practices is well known since, in an elaborated form and eventually widened to include non-nobility, it has survived throughout Chinese history in the lettered class of state officials. In Chou and Han times there certainly existed a wide variety of other beliefs, most of which have disappeared without trace.

The Netherworld. Commoners had no individualized ancestors, probably no *hun* spirit; their souls descended into the earth and were thought to assure the fertility of the family fields where they were buried. We do not know what cults were practiced for them.

Belief in the Yellow Springs, probably a feature of early folk culture, is attested mostly in poetic laments about death, but they are never described in any detail. The Yellow Springs seems to have been a sad realm of the shades, not unlike the Greek Hades. That it was imagined very close under the surface of the earth becomes clear in the tale of Prince Chuang (eighth century BCE), who had sworn never again to set eyes on his mother "until both came to the Yellow Springs." Later repenting of this oath, he dug a tunnel and, entering it, was able to meet his mother under the earth without violating his oath (*Tso chuan*, Duke Yin, first year).

Identity of Life and Death. The philosophers also imagined destinies for man's souls. "Man's life is a coming-together of breath [*ch'i*]. If it comes together, there is life; if it scatters, there is death" (*Chuang-tzu*, chap. 22). Death was seen as a redispersing of the *ch'i* energy into the *ch'i* freely flowing between Heaven and earth, like drops of a liquid poured back into water.

Those thinkers who emphasized the universal rhythm of transformation in nature and advocated man's adaptation to this "Way" *(tao)* saw death as but one phase in the process of change. "Do not disturb the process of change!" said Li to the grieving family of a sick friend. He then asks the friend, "What is the Creator [personified Change] going to make of you next? . . . Will he make you into a rat's liver? Will he make you into a bug's arm?" (*Chuang-tzu*, chap. 6). Chuang-tzu here alludes to ancient peasant beliefs in the metamorphosis of all creatures into each other, as silkworms are transformed into moths. He applies these beliefs in physical metamorphosis to the natural transition from life to death and so brings himself to the conclusion that the afterlife can be seen in a happier light than life in this world. "How do I know that the dead do not wonder why they ever longed for life?" he asks (chap. 2). A skull confirms his view: "Among the dead, there are no such things as lords, vassals, seasons, or tasks. Peaceful as we are, we have no age but that of Heaven and Earth. A king on his throne does not enjoy greater felicity than ours" (chap. 18). Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu both thought that death should be neither feared nor desired, advocating instead a resigned and serene acceptance of death as a part of the ever-changing mechanism of nature.

Although peasant beliefs are used as illustrations, these were the highly sophisticated views of mystics nurtured on the worldview of the *I ching* (Book of Changes). The common people's attitude was nearer that of Achilles in the underworld, who tells Odysseus that he would prefer to live on earth as the hireling of another than be king over all the dead.

Prolonging Life in This World. Stronger than the impulse to improve one's lot after death were the efforts to prolong life in this world. Life was greatly treasured and, in the course of the first millennium BCE, the Chinese came to place more and more emphasis on longevity. This is evidenced by bronze inscriptions from the eighth century BCE onward that speak of *nan-lao* ("retardation of old age"), *pao-shen* ("preservation of the body"), and *wu-ssu* ("deathlessness"). From about 400 BCE onward the belief existed that some men had achieved perpetual life, that their souls had neither gone to the Yellow Springs nor dissipated into the vastness of the universe; instead they were preserved in a perfected spectral body, able to wander on earth and among the stars forever. These were the "immortals" *(hsien)*. Their appearance in Han iconography as birdlike men, sprouting feathers over their body or fitted with wings, was influenced by the ancient bird mythology of the northeastern seaboard. [*See* Hsien.]

The Paradises of the Immortals. The immortals had "transcended the world" *(tu-shih)*, "ascended to distant places" *(teng-hsia)*, and lived in a world of light, on

holy mountains, or in paradises situated at the rim of the world. P'eng-lai, a paradise island, was imagined to be in the East China Sea. From the fourth to the second century BCE, princes and emperors sent out repeated expeditions in search of it and the drug of deathlessness rumored to be obtainable there. Chuang-tzu does not use the term *hsien*, but his description of the Perfected Ones *(chen-jen)* on Mount Ku-she gives an idea of the physical techniques they practiced and of the beneficent influence they were thought to exercise. "Their skin is like ice or snow, and they are gentle and shy like young girls. They do not eat the five grains, but suck the wind, drink the dew, climb up on the clouds and mist, ride flying dragons and wander beyond the four seas. By concentrating their spirit, they can protect creatures from sickness and plague and make the harvest plentiful" (chap. 1). [See Chen-jen.]

Toward the middle of the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), new geographical knowledge created a shift of interest to the northwest. Mount K'un-lun on the threshold of Central Asia had long been a mythical nine-layered mountain that led up to the Gate of Heaven. Its deity, the Queen Mother of the West (Hsi Wang Mu), was a timeless creature with the tail of a leopard and the teeth of a tiger, reigning over the land where the sun sets. Soon she was venerated as a donor of the drug of immortality (in Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju's poems) and by the second century CE she had become the queen of a western paradise, one peopled by immortals and sought by all those who exerted themselves in the mental and bodily techniques of immortality. [See Hsi Wang Mu.]

Tokens of Immortality in Han Tombs. The recent archaeological discovery of Hsi Wang Mu in fresco paintings, on stone reliefs, and on bronze mirrors in many Han tombs has added a new facet to our knowledge of this deity. Hsi Wang Mu was not only queen of those who had avoided death and achieved immortality, but she seems also to have played a major role in mortuary cults. The rich imagery of the immortality cult is expressed in tomb furnishings, which demonstrate a wish, if not a belief, that the dead too may accede to immortality. The famous silk painting of the Ma-wang-tui Tomb no. 1 in central China (168 BCE) shows the journey of the soul through what some interpret as the Isle of P'eng-lai up to Heaven; in later tombs, pictures of the deceased's journey to the mountain of Hsi Wang Mu predominate.

The contradiction between burial of the dead and deathless immortality on Mount K'un-lun was bridged by the belief that immortals die an apparent death and are buried like everyone else. Only a later inspection of their tomb reveals that the "corpse" buried was in fact only some personal item like their sandals. In 110 BCE,

Emperor Wu of the Han expressed surprise at the existence of a tomb of the Yellow Emperor (Huang-ti), who was said to have ascended straight to Heaven; he was told that the tomb contained only Huang-ti's hat and robe (*Shih chi* 28). [See Huang-ti.]

Collective Ascensions to Heaven. Popular belief in the effectiveness of elixirs created stories of immortality gained without any arduous practice. Huang-ti ascended to Heaven with his whole court and harem. The prince of Huai-nan (d. 122 BCE), a great patron of Taoist *fang-shih* masters, ascended with his household, including his dogs and livestock (*Lun heng*, c. 80 CE). [See Fang-shih.] Another rare glimpse into Han immortality lore is the story of T'ang Kung-fang, a petty official (c. 7 CE) who received enough elixir from a supernatural master to feed it to his family and domestic animals, and also to daub his house with it, whereupon man, beast, and house rose into the clouds (*Ch'üan Hou Han wen* 106). This story also shows the widening, during the Han period, of the social basis of these beliefs; immortality and afterlife in heaven ceased to be a prerogative of the nobles.

The Netherworld of Mount T'ai. Miracle tales and a fascination with the unique Chinese concept of material immortality must not cloud our view of the ordinary fate of the dead in the centuries preceding the advent of Buddhism in China. Recent archaeological discoveries enable us to date the bureaucratization of the Chinese otherworld to rather less than a century after the establishment of the earthly centralized empires of Ch'in and Han. In the Ma-wang-tui tombs mentioned earlier were found official lists itemizing the mortuary objects and addressed to an underworld official with the request to forward this document to the Lord of the Dead (Chu-tsang Chün). A poem of the same period links the sad underworld of the Yellow Springs with Kao-li, a peak near Mount T'ai, whence come the summons of death (*Han shu* 63). Mount T'ai, the Eastern Sacred Peak in Shantung, long since venerated as the origin of all life, in the Han dynasty becomes the seat of the otherworldly administration. It is the tribunal where the records of the living and the dead are kept on jade tablets (see especially *Feng-su t'ung-i*) and whither the *hun* and *p'o* souls are summoned. The deity of Mount T'ai is the "grandson of the Heavenly Emperor" (see *Hsiao-ching yüan-shen ch'i*); his realm is a forecourt of Heaven and the earthly branch of a developing stellar bureaucracy of destiny. The "Director of Destinies" (Ssu-ming), a stellar deity with the powers to lengthen or to shorten man's life, appeared already in the *Ch'u tz'u* in the third century BCE. *Huai-nan–tzu* (chap. 3) tells of four stellar palaces that administer rewards and punishments. The judgment of these ministries probably concerned both

the living and the dead. Mount T'ai also acquires a judiciary function with the power to lengthen or shorten the allotted lifespan; a late Han *fang-shih* made a pilgrimage to Mount T'ai to petition the god for a longer life (*Hou Han shu* 112).

A rich panorama of an otherwordly bureaucracy unfolds in the popular literature of the following centuries. Those who expired after a meritorious or saintly life can reach high office in the hereafter, whereas those who had died a violent death and those deprived of proper burial or offerings at their tombs languish as prisoners or corvée laborers. The term for the underworld changes from "below the earth" (*ti-hsia*) to "earth prefecture" (*t'u-fu*, in the *T'ai-p'ing ching*) and to "prison in the earth" (*ti-yü*, which became the translation also for the Buddhist hells).

The border between this world and the other remains fluid. Messengers from Mount T'ai can be sighted on their errands and unjustly executed men can, in the otherworldly tribunals they reach, have their tormentors condemned to early death. Descriptions of these tribunals abound in stories of men who died and came back to life, having been summoned to Mount T'ai by bureaucratic error (see *Sou-shen chi; Yüan-hun chih*). The judge of the dead is the Lord of the Tribunal of Mount T'ai (T'ai-shan Fu-chün). Around the fifth century CE he is dislodged by the Buddhist King Yama, whose scribe he becomes in the Buddhist hells.

The Otherworldly Bureaucracy of Taoism. In the emerging Taoist religion new concepts evolved that helped to shape Chinese Buddhist notions of the afterlife. One's initiation into the Celestial Master sect (T'ien-shih Tao, late second century CE) meant access to the hierarchy of the immortals and salvation from an afterlife existence as a demon in the domain of the subterranean Water Official (Shui-kuan) or in jails inside mountain caverns. The Three Officials (San Kuan, of Heaven, Earth, and Water) and the Five Emperors of the Five Sacred Mountains constituted a comprehensive otherworldly network in which the spirits of the just advanced in an administrative hierarchy that led to ever higher immortal status while the uninitiated and the wicked constituted the hordes of subservient demons (*Pao-p'u–tzu* 3; *Chen kao* 15, 16). Mediumistic revelations informed the living about the other world. They revealed the names of gods and demons that should be offered propitiatory or apotropaic rites, or summoned a deserving adept to a vacant office in the beyond (see *Ming-t'ung chi*).

Sinners were criminals, sins were crimes; atonement and advancement followed judiciary procedure. The emphasis is never on torments in hells but on continued advancement through the netherworldly hierarchy to

the stellar palaces of the immortals. Attention was less on the sufferings of the wicked than on the rites performed to appease demons, the unshriven dead, who threaten to harm the living. An important concern was the supernatural inspection of man's good and bad deeds, duplicate records of which were kept in stellar offices and in the mountain tribunals. These registers determined the length of man's lifespan, his status in the world beyond the tomb, and sometimes even the destiny of his descendants (see *T'ai-p'ing ching; Pao-p'u–tzu; Ch'ih-sung-tzu chung chieh ching*).

In these basic features, which already included a judiciary concept of judgment and retribution of crimes, this Chinese underworld as yet owes nothing to Buddhism. Between the second and the seventh century it was enriched by the doctrines of *karman*, retribution in hells, and reincarnation. It in turn had a profound influence on the Chinese Buddhist concepts of the afterlife, for in Chinese Buddhism, the tribunals became the way stations of the soul on its path to reincarnation. The scenario of Buddhist judgment that emerges in the tenth century CE is a huge tribunal with the so-called Ten Buddhist Kings of Hell, who are represented as ten Chinese magistrates presiding over ten courts of justice. Among these magistrates we find King Yama and the King of Mount T'ai (see *Shih-wang ching*).

[*See also* Chinese Religion, *article on* Mythic Themes; Soul, *article on* Chinese Concepts; Alchemy, *article on* Chinese Alchemy; *and* Taoism, *overview article and article on* The Taoist Religious Community.]

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AGA KHAN (Pers., Āghā Khān). First conferred in 1817 on the Ismāʿīlī imam (spiritual leader) Ḥasan ʿAlī Shāh (d. 1881) by the Qajar shah of Iran, this hereditary title is now applied to the imam of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī Muslims. As imams of a Shīʿī community, the Aga Khans have always based their claims to leadership on their descent from ʿAlī and Fāṭimah, the son-in-law and daughter of the prophet Muḥammad. Their followers, who reside mainly in various Third World countries, have traditionally looked to them for guidance on religious as well as secular matters.

Intrigues at the Iranian court during the 1830s forced Aga Khan I to migrate to India, where, under British protection, he eventually established headquarters in Bombay in 1848. An important British ally during the conquest of Sind, Aga Khan I faced strong challenges to his leadership from within his community. Most of these challenges were resolved in 1866 when Sir Joseph Arnould of the Bombay High Court issued a judgment in favor of the Aga Khan. His son ʿAlī Shāh (d. 1885) became Aga Khan II; he was, after a short period, succeeded in turn by his son, Sir Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh.

Aga Khan III (d. 1957) initiated a process of modernizing the community through the establishment of schools, dispensaries, hospitals, housing societies, welfare organizations; the creation of communal administrative structures; and the emancipation and education of Ismāʿīlī women. He also participated in a wide range of political, social, and philanthropic activities for the benefit of Muslims, particularly those of the Indian subcontinent. His important role in public life led to his election to the presidency of the League of Nations in 1937. Under his grandson, Shāh Karīm al-Ḥusaynī, Aga Khan IV (b. 1936), an international university, the Aga Khan University, was established, with its first faculty in Karachi, Pakistan. The Aga Khan Foundation, an agency founded in 1967, is actively involved in diverse humanitarian and cultural activities.

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AGAPE. *See* Charity; Eucharist; *and* Love.

AGES OF THE WORLD. The notion that the world or the cosmos, as a living thing, undergoes stages of development similar to those of a human individual is more than a poetic conceit; it is a ubiquitous belief, one that is frequently displayed in linguistic phenomena. For example, lying behind the English word *world* is an old Germanic compound, **wer-aldh*, meaning "the life, or age, of man"; in Indo-European languages, the terms for "life" or "world" and terms designating temporal periods often shade off into each other, as in the Greek *aion* or the Latin *saeculum*.

Systems of Binary Periodization. The simplest form of world-periodization is a binary one: *before and after, then and now, now and then*. The distinction *before and after* is most frequently expressed in historicized form but often carries with it religious evaluation. Thus, while there are commemorative base years in some chronological systems, such as 4 Ahau 8 Cumkú (3133 BCE) among the Maya, 1 Flint (1168 CE) among the Aztec, or the Saka era (78 CE) in India, most such systems are built around events in the lives of founders. The most familiar of these systems is the division of all human history into BC (before Christ) and AD (*anno Domini*, "in the year of our Lord," i.e., after Christ), a distinction created by the Christian monk Dionysius Exiguus in the first half of the sixth century. Dionysius established the beginning of the Christian era (or the Era of the Incarnation) as 1 January 754 AUC (*anno urbis conditae*, "from the foundation of the city [of Rome]"). The system of dating by AD did not come into wide usage until the eleventh century; the negative chronology of BC gained currency only after the publication in 1681 of Jacques-Benigne Bossuet's *Universal History*. However, Dionysius's system ultimately became so widely accepted that it formed the basis of a new system, created in the last decades of the twentieth century, that distinguished between "the common era" (CE) and "before the common era" (BCE). (The CE-BCE system was soon increasingly favored by English-language scholars and is, in fact, the system employed by this encyclopedia.)

Periodizations similar to the Christian system are found in other religious traditions: the Muslim system of dating events AH (*anno Hegirae*, "in the year of the Hijrah"), attributed to the second caliph, ʿUmar I (634–644); the Buddhist era, in use in Ceylon and Southeast Asia, which begins with the Buddha's attaining *nirvāṇa* in 544 BCE; the Jain era, commencing with the death of Jina in 528 BCE; and the Kollam era, restricted to the Malabar Coast, associated with Paraśurāma, an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu.

The other modes of binary periodization—*then and now, now and then*—while sometimes found in historicized form (such as the distinction between *antediluvian* and *postdiluvian* in Sumero-Akkadian literature) are, more usually, connected to explicit mythical themes, es-

pecially those concerned with anthropogony and eschatology. They presuppose that a sharp cleavage may be described as existing between the present state of things and an anterior or posterior state. The contrast between *then* and *now* finds its most common expression as that between an ancestral time in the mythical past and the present time of human beings. This contrast may play a dominant role in an entire religious system (as does the notion of the "Dreaming" among the Australian Aborigines), or it may serve as a motif in myths of paradise, of a Golden Age, of the origin of death, of the relocation of a high god, of a deluge, or of a fall. The distinction between *now* and *then* occurs widely in apocalyptic and millenarian traditions as in the distinction between this age and the age to come, or in mythologies concerning the end of the world.

As the above suggests, the category "ages of the world" is a somewhat fluid one. At times its primary focus is on the entire universe, at times it is limited to the earth; at times it includes the gods, humans, and all living beings, at times it is centered on man, or on stages of human history. In some traditions all of these aspects are interwoven into a cosmic drama; in other traditions only one or another of these aspects will be found.

Systems of Serial Periodization. In the usual understanding of ages of the world, more than a simple binary periodization is present; there is a system of serial periodization. Three forms predominate: a tradition of world-periods, a tradition of myths of recurrence, and a system of cosmic periods.

World-periods. The simplest form of serial periodization marks out a succession of periods from creation to final destruction, from a beginning to an end.

Iranian traditions. It is exceedingly difficult to order the Iranian traditions concerning successive world-periods with any certainty due to the fact that the most elaborate mythic schema are found only in late Pahlavi books redacted no earlier than the ninth century CE. This not simply an internal problem; it affects matters of comparison as well, inasmuch as the Iranian traditions have been held by many scholars to have been influential on Greco-Roman, Israelitic, and Christian traditions of the ages of the world that predate the Pahlavi texts. Nevertheless, elements of the fully elaborated, later traditions can be found in early texts. The myth of the Golden Age of the primordial king, Yima, is a pre-Zoroastrian, Indo-Iranian tradition; the associated notion of a worldwide, catastrophic winter that will destroy terrestrial life is an archaic Indo-European motif. The important title for savior, *saoshyant*, applied in the first instance to Zarathushtra (Zoroaster), and the notion that the present age will be transformed by the prophet immediately into one that is "excellent" with yet a future

age of re-creation and transformation, occur in the earliest Zoroastrian literary strata. What is more important, from Greek reports of Iranian tradition as early as the fourth century BCE, we learn of a three-thousand-year period when one god will rule over another; a three-thousand-year period when the two gods will struggle; and a third period, of unspecified length, which will be a golden age. Hades (i.e., Ahriman) will lose power, there will be universal happiness and no need for food, and the god (Ōhrmazd) who achieved these things will be at "rest" (Theopompus, quoted in Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris* 47). Armenian Christian sources, such as Eznik of Kolb (fifth century), provide the basic elements of the Zurvanist dualistic myth, according to which prior to creation the two rival deities, Ōhrmazd and Ahriman, are each assigned nine thousand years of kingship by their father, Zurwān. Finally, there is the elaborate apocalyptic portrait of the signs of the end fully developed in the Iranian *Oracle of Hystaspes* (first century BCE), well known from its citation in Greek and Latin Christian sources from the second and third centuries.

The Sasanid period (226–652 CE) was one of intense theological controversy between rival cosmologies, out of which emerged the system of dividing the ages of the world into four trimillennia as elaborated in the Pahlavi books. The system received its classic formulation in the *Bundahishn* (Book of Primordial Creation), itself a composite work containing both elements of orthodox Mazdean speculation and Zurvanist myth. In the first trimillennium, Ōhrmazd and Ahriman coexist in Infinite Time, the former in an upper realm of light, the latter in a lower realm of darkness. After becoming aware of each other and their predestined struggle, they each fashion weapons. At the close of the first trimillennium, Ahriman crosses the Void and attacks Ōhrmazd. Ōhrmazd offers peace and is rejected. Then, knowing that he is destined to win the struggle, Ōhrmazd proposes a limit to their contest—a period of nine thousand years. After Ahriman accepts, Ōhrmazd begins a new stage of the battle by reciting the central Zoroastrian prayer, the Ahuna Vairya. Thereupon Ahriman falls back into darkness, where he remains for three thousand years.

During this period of Ahriman's relative impotence, Ōhrmazd brings creation into being. Creation occurrs at two complimentary levels as a series of spiritual and material creations, the latter including Gav-aēvō-dāta (the primordial ox) and Gayō-maretan (primordial man). Ahriman, in his realm, generates his own creations and, at the end of the second trimillennium, invades Ōhrmazd's world. He corrupts it and kills Gayō-maretan and Gav-aévō-dāta, out of whose bodies man, living things, and metals are generated.

The third trimillennium is Ahriman's triumph, but this turns out to be a trap. Ahriman is caught in the material world. The final trimillennium is devoted to the salvation of the world, beginning with the birth of Zarathushtra. Each of the three milleniums will be marked by a savior (a descendent of Zarathushtra) until the final millennium of Saoshyant, when there will be a final judgment, the granting of immortality, and a new world. This basic myth was adapted to a variety of systems of Iranian religious thought; a further permutation occurs in the myth of the Three Epochs in Manichaeism.

Jewish traditions. There appears to be no indigenous Israelitic tradition of the ages of the world. The historicized sequence in the *Book of Daniel* (second or third century BC), so influential on later Jewish and Christian periodizations, of four world-empires followed by a divine kingdom and symbolized by metals or beasts (*Dn.* 2:37–45, 7:2–27) is an adaptation of Iranian anti-Hellenistic propaganda. Based, perhaps, on the sabbath-week, there is a noticeable predilection for multiples of seven. Already in *Daniel* 9, history from the Babylonian exile to the End is divided into seventy weeks of years (i.e., seventy heptads). Similar periodizations recur in a variety of early Jewish works (second century BCE–second century CE). There are schemas that divide the world into seven ages of a thousand years each (*Testament of Abraham* 19) or six ages of a thousand years plus a millennium of rest (*2 Enoch* 33:1–2). The "Apocalypse of Weeks" divides history into ten weeks of unequal length: seven weeks are past history, three are the age to come (*1 Enoch* 93:1–10, 91:12–17). The complex calculation of jubilees (seven times seven) is employed to periodize history from creation to new creation in the *Book of Jubilees* and the *Assumption of Moses.* The duration of "this world" in contradistinction to the "world to come" is frequently given as seven thousand years, less frequently six thousand, with a division into three ages: the Age of Confusion, the Age of the Torah, and the Age of the Messiah (B.T., *San.* 97b, *'A.Z.* 9b). The other numerological system, apparently borrowed from the Iranian, focused on twelve periods (*2 Bar.* 56; *T. Ab.* 7b; *Apocalypse of Abraham* 20, 28), with the most tantalizing schema presented in the brief report in *2 Esdras* 14.11 (*4 Esdras* in the Vulgate) that the age of the world is divided into twelve parts, nine parts; and half of the tenth have already passed, two parts and the second half of the tenth remain. However, the basic distinction in the Jewish rabbinic traditions remains persistently dualistic: there are two ages of the world, "this age" *(ha-'olam hazeh)* and the "age to come" *(ha-'olam ha-ba').*

Christian traditions. The emerging Christian traditions of the ages of the world must be seen first in relation to the Jewish. The primitive Christian writings of the first century focused on the central duality of "this age" and the "age to come" (*Mt.* 12:32, *Eph.* 1:21), being convinced that "the end of the ages has come" (*1 Cor.* 10.11). In the second and third centuries, building on contemporary exegesis of *Psalms* 90:4 (i.e., that a day for the deity equals a thousand years) and Asian Christian traditions of a thousand-year earthly reign of Christ (the millennium), which will be a Golden Age (*Rv.* 20:2–7; Papias, in Eusebius, *Church History* 3.39.1–2; Justin, *Dialogue* 81.3–4; Lactantius, *Divine Institutions* 7.24), and joined to Jewish speculations on the sabbath-week, the hexameral system was developed. This system postulated that the first six days of creation, understood as a period of six thousand years, represented the history of the world; the seventh day represented the thousand-year reign of Christ or the end of the world; occasionally an eighth day would be added, signifying "the beginning of another world" (*Barnabas* 15.3–8; Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5.28.3; Methodius, *Banquet* 9; Victorinus of Pettau, *On the Creation of the World* 6; Hippolytus, *Commentary on Daniel* 4.23). In such a periodization, the period of the Incarnation would either be placed in the middle of the sixth millennium (that is, 5,500 years since creation, as in Theophilus, *To Autolycus* 3.28) or at its close (the year 6000, as in Pseudo-Cyprian, *Sinai and Zion* 6). The sabbath-week system at times interacted with a fourfold system of periodization loosely based on Paul in *Galatians* 3.15–26: a period before the law; the period of the law; the period of the prophets; and, equivalent to the sabbath, the period of grace or freedom.

The most influential Christian ages of the world system was that briefly sketched out in the penultimate paragraph of Augustine's *City of God* (22.30) in the first quarter of the fifth century. The first age was from Adam to the Flood, the second from the Flood to Abraham, the third from Abraham to David, the fourth from David to the Babylonian exile, the fifth from the exile to Christ, the sixth age was the present Christian era, the seventh would mark the millennium, followed by an eighth "eternal day" of repose. Although Augustine noted temporal symmetry within the first five ages, he freed the schema from its rigid chronological limitation to a total of five or six thousand years. This flexibility allowed Augustine's system to be the base of most medieval Christian theories and to be influential through the Renaissance (see Coluccio Salutati's letter to Zonari of 5 May 1379).

Over time, modifications of the Augustinian schema

were introduced. The eighth age was largely ignored. Some authors, such as Philipp van Haveng in the twelfth century, introduced the notion of an alternation of good and evil ages. The most significant modification was the work of the Calabrian mystic Joachim of Fiore (1132–1202). Joachim's work was a dazzling set of interrelated schemata built around twos, threes, sixes, sevens, and twelves. Alongside the traditional notion of "age" (aetas), Joachim introduced the terminology of "stage" (status) so that each period was seen as progressive toward a historical fulfillment and as "incubating" its successor. The first five ages, as in Augustine, extended from Adam to Christ, the sixth age was the era of the church; the seventh, the time of consummation. Further schemata were superimposed on this traditional outline. Within the first four ages, the period from Abraham to the prophets was the first stage, that of the Father, with a period of germination from Adam to Jacob and of fruition from Jacob to the prophets. The second stage, that of the Son, extended from the prophets to the present (c. 1260), with a period of germination from the prophets to Christ and of fruition from Christ to Benedict of Nursia. This second portion (which corresponds to the sixth age) was divided into six smaller periods (etatulae) with Joachim's times at the end of the fifth period. Yet ahead was the third stage of the Holy Spirit where, following the defeat of the Antichrist at the end of the second state, a "new people of God" would be brought into being. It will be a Golden Age without labor, heaven will descend to earth, and life will be lived in beatific ecstasy.

Such mythic schemata persist in more secular, Western historical periodizations, but they have interacted as well with non-Christian mythologies in a variety of recent nativist movements, such as the Kugu Sorta ("big candle") movement among the Mari (Cheremis) in the U.S.S.R. According to this tradition, human history began with a Golden Age and will return to one at the end of time. In between are seventeen historical ages, the present being the ninth. Beginning with the tenth age, the earth will become uninhabitable except by members of the sect.

Myths of recurrence. In a second form of serial periodization, the same series is repeated through multiple cycles of creation or activity.

Babylonian traditions. It would appear that, based on their careful astronomical observations of periodicity, late Babylonian cosmologists (e.g., Berossos, third century BCE) developed the notion of a repetitive cosmic "great year" divided into two seasons: summer, when all the planets were in conjunction with Cancer, would result in world-conflagration; winter, when the planets

were in conjunction with Capricorn, would produce a universal flood (Seneca, *Naturales quaestiones* 2.29.1; the schema is attributed to Aristotle in Censorinus, *De die natali* 18.11). As brought over into Greco-Roman thought, the duration of the "great year" was fixed at 12,954 ordinary years (Cicero in the *Hortensius* according to Tacitus, *Dialogus de Oratoribus* 16.7). This period was later identified by Christian authors as the life span of the phoenix (Solinus, *Collectanea rerum Memorabilium* 33.13). Berossos himself appears to have used a far larger time scale. He fixes the reign of the ten antediluvian kings as lasting 432,000 years (a number that is the same as the Indic *kaliyuga*, which was probably influenced by Babylonian speculation).

Greco-Roman traditions. Most likely influenced by the Babylonian "great year," there was a lively Greek and Roman philosophical debate over recurrence, conjoined at times to the topic of the eternity of the world or the plurality of worlds, at other times to the transformation of the Hesiod myth of the five races of men into the later myth of the five or four ages of man. Although foreshadowings of this debate can be found in earlier Greek writers, it was most fully developed by the Stoics, many of whom came from the hellenized Near East. This world is but the present member of a series of identical worlds. At a particular planetary conjunction, the world will be destroyed by fire (*ekpyrōsis*), and, following another conjunction, will be restored out of fire "precisely as before." The elements of the cosmos will be in their same place, each individual life will recur with exactly the same experiences. There will be no novelty; "everything is repeated down to the minutest detail," not just once, but over and over again without end (Nemesius, *On the Nature of Man* 38).

Scandinavian traditions. In the *Vǫluspá* and in Snorri's *Glyfaginning*, a myth of both the creation and eventual destruction of the world is presented that appears to be an instance of a common Indo-European pattern. A series of worlds came into being around the great world-tree, Yggdrasill. Following a series of creative acts, the gods and then man came into existence. After a long period, there will come Ragnarǫk, the destruction of the gods and man, preceded by Fimbulvetr, the great worldwide winter (compare the Iranian myth of Yima). The Great Snake will emerge from the ocean and flood the world; demons attack Ásgarðr, the home of the gods, and the gods and demons meet in cosmic battle in which each side slays the other. Finally, the only survivor, the giant Surtr, sets off the cosmic fire that will destroy the world. There are disparate hints that this is not the final end. The world will be restored, the sons of the dead gods will return, Baldr will reemerge, the two

surviving human beings (Líf and Lífþrasir, "life" and "life-holding"), having been sheltered by the world tree, will repopulate the earth, and the cycle continue (*Vǫluspá* 31–58; Snorri, *Gylfaginning* 51–53; *Vafþrúðnismal* 44–45).

Cosmic periods of creation. The most complex form of serial periodization features a mythology containing a series of cosmic ages, related to each other, although separated from one another by catastrophes, so that each successive creation is both a new act and, in some sense, a recapitulation of its predecessors.

Indic traditions. One of the most complex systems detailing the endless repetition of cosmic ages of the world was developed in India. Although elements occur in earlier texts, the systematic elaboration appears to be a development largely of the epic and Puranic literature between the fifth and third centuries BCE. While largely indigenous in its full expression, aspects of the system reflect the considerable interaction between Near Eastern, Hellenistic, Iranian, and Indian traditions of that time as well as more archaic Indo-European motifs.

The fundamental schema is built around a complete cycle of cosmic existence (*mahāyuga*), divided into four ages (*yuga*s) of unequal length and valence, each preceded and followed by a period of transition, a "dawn" or "dusk" of proportionate duration. In its most abstract form, the four ages are correlated to throws of dice: the *kṛtayuga* (4), the *tretāyuga* (3), the *dvāparayuga* (2), and the *kaliyuga* (1). This system yields various proportional measurements for the duration of each age in different traditions: 4000/3000/2000/1000 or 4800/3600/2400/1200 or 1,728,000/1,296,000/764,000/432,000 years, yielding equivalent measurements for the length of a *mahāyuga*: 10,000 or 12,000 or 4,320,000 years. In the fully elaborated system, even more extended numbers are employed. A thousand *mahāyuga*s equal one *kalpa*, which corresponds to either a day or a night in the life of Brahmā (his total life is 311,040 billion human years). Within each *kalpa* are fourteen secondary cycles (*manvantara*s), each preceded by the destruction and recreation of the world and a new manifestation of Manu, the progenitor of the human race. (For major versions of the *yuga* myth, see *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* 3.11.6–37; *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* 1.7.19–63 and 1.29.4–40; *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 1.3.1–25.)

The fully developed myth of the four *yuga*s is essentially a cosmogony described in temporal language, yet it contains within it several strands of tradition well-integrated in some versions but capable of appearing independently in other texts. One such strand is a numerical tradition that elaborates the basic schema of four proportional periods into vast cosmic numbers.

This numerical schema is correlated with a tradition of the decline of *dharma*. Thus the *kṛtayuga* is also known as the *satyayuga* ("age of truth") and is characterized by elements drawn from the well-developed and independent Indic mythology of a Golden Age. The *tretāyuga* is characterized by a diminution of virtue and by the introduction of death and labor into the human sphere, that is to say, by an end to the Golden Age. The *dvāparayuga* marks the transition to the degenerative half of the cycle: evil increases, and the human life span decreases. The *kaliyuga*, which is the present age, dated by some as having begun in 3102 BCE (the traditional date of the war recounted in the *Mahābhārata*), is a period of discord and disintegration wherein evil triumphs. Through this correlation, the cosmogonic structure of the *yuga*s has been transformed into an anthropology. The *yuga* myth is further intertwined with the mythology of Brahmā and Viṣṇu, especially their roles in the rhythmic expansion and contraction of the cosmos. This element is especially prominent in accounts of the *mahāpralaya*, the "great dissolution" (*Matsya Purāṇa* 167.13–25). Finally, there is the royal mythology of the Manus and the *avatāra*s of Viṣṇu, expressed in the *manvantara* cycle.

With important modifications and different soteriological implications, the Indic cosmic ages were adapted by both Buddhism and Jainism. The Indic system was influential as well on Neo-Confucian speculations on the ages of the world.

Mesoamerican traditions. Among the northern Maya, there is considerable evidence for both the conception of time (*kin*) without beginning or end that allows vast chronological computations extending back four hundred million years, a duration that encompasses all past and future world cycles, and the mythic notion of a number of previous worlds, each terminated by a universal flood.

In the Aztec traditions, as exemplified by the more than twenty versions of the myth of the suns, the *Leyenda de los Soles*, and as carved on the so-called Calendar Stone, a more complex picture is presented. Superimposed on an archaic myth that, like the Maya, depicted a continuous series of cosmic creations and destructions, is a myth of five suns, each marking an age of the world as part of a cosmogonic drama involving the struggles for supremacy among the Tezcatlipocas, the sons of the androgynous supreme deity, Ometeotl. Each one would create a world only to have it destroyed by another. Four such primeval worlds are identified, each named after the mode of their destruction: the world of the first sun, 4 Jaguar, which lasted 676 years until its inhabitants were devoured by jaguars; the second sun, 4 Wind, which lasted 364 years, until winds

blew away its inhabitants; the third sun, 4 Rain of Fire, which lasted 312 years, until its people were destroyed by a heavenly fire; and the fourth sun, 4 Water, which lasted 676 years and ended in a universal deluge. The fifth sun, 4 Movement, is the world that the Aztec inhabit and represents a revolution in the cycle of creation and destruction. Rather than the peripheral symbols of the four cardinal directions, with which the previous worlds are identified, the fifth sun is the world of the center, guaranteed by an agreement between the rival deities and by divine acts of self-sacrifice.

[*See also* Golden Age *and* Utopia.]

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JONATHAN Z. SMITH

AGGADAH. *See* Midrash and Aggadah.

AGNI is the god of fire in ancient and traditional India. Derived from an Indo-European root, the Sanskrit word *agni* ("fire") is related to such other forms as Latin *ignis* and Lithuanian *ugnis*. A cognate appears in a Hittite text found at Bogazköy in the name *Ak/gniš*, identifying a god of devastation and annihilation. Although his mythological and ritual roots are reflected in Old Irish, Roman, and Iranian sources, the peculiar development of the god of fire as Agni owes as much to the ritualizing tendencies, the priestly vision, and the strong asceticism of the Indian context as it does to the god's Indo-European heritage.

The Ritual Context. Fire and heat play a central role in Vedic man's understanding of himself within the cosmos. Fire is at once the most intimate and the most universal of elements; it can simultaneously inflict pain and bring purity, and it will, in an instant, make a person blind or give him vision. Fire is most fascinating to the Aryans, however, because of its capacity for domestication: with the taming of fire (and therefore of nature at large) come both the foundations of civilization and the means for release from it.

The Vedic mastery of fire took place within the ritual context. As the solemn *(śrauta)* ritual developed, a system of correspondences was devised whereby priests could manipulate the fires and fire hearths to create and control a tripartite cosmos: Agni as the heavenly fire, or sun, resided in the western *āhavanīya* hearth with the gods; Agni as the atmospheric fire, or moon, resided in

the southern *dakṣiṇāgni* hearth with the ancestors *(pitara*s); and Agni as the earthly fire or domestic flame resided in the western *gārhapatya* hearth with men. This system of homologies also made reference to the newly emerging class system: the heavenly or offering fire represented the priest *(brāhmaṇa)*, the atmospheric or protecting fire the warrior *(kṣatriya)*, and the earthly or producing fire the merchant *(vaiśya)*.

As the central civilizing agent, the ritual fire played a special role in the development of the domestic *(gṛhya)* liturgy, particularly in the marriage rite (Vivāha) and funeral ceremony (Antyeṣṭi). As the symbol and agent of the transformative process, fire with its heat stood midway between the coolness of celibate studenthood and restrained householdership, and between this life and the next. Marriage itself was effected by circumambulating the fire clockwise seven times, and true wifehood implied the continual presence of the cooking fire. Likewise, passage beyond death required the special translatory properties of the cremation fire, which, because it destroyed, purified, and "reconstituted" the old self into a new one, was treated cautiously by priests, who feared the potentially demonic qualities of Agni the *kravyād* ("flesh-eating one"). Furthermore, in a practice known in India at least as early as the epics and officially banned by the British in 1828, the wife as *satī* joined her husband on his funeral pyre, thereby ensuring the spiritual mutation by fire of the entire sacrificial unit (e.g., husband and wife) into the next world.

Fire was also used to test a man's truth. Because Agni was the god who presided over speech, the truth of a man's words was demonstrated by Agni as the "defendant" walked through (or endured an assault by) fire. The best-known example of this is in the *Rāmāyaṇa* where Sītā, after being released from Rāvaṇa's citadel in Laṅkā, is made to prove her fidelity to Rāma by publicly entering the flames.

The Mythology of Agni. The "personality" of Agni, as developed early in Vedic thought, delineates both the specific functions of the ritual and the divine models for the behavior of man. Next to Indra, Agni is the most prominent of the Ṛgvedic gods, and his anthropomorphic qualities are taken directly from the physical fire: for example, smoke-bannered, flame-haired, tawny-bearded, sharp-jawed, bright-toothed, and seven-tongued. As the mouth of the gods, Agni becomes butter backed and butter faced on receipt of his food, the sacrificial ghee (clarified butter). He has horns and bellows like a bull; he has a tail and is groomed like a horse; and he is winged like the eagle of the sky. Ever renewed in the ritual hearth, Agni is both the youngest and the oldest of the gods, and although born of Dyaus, the sky

god, his real parents are the two *araṇī*s ("fire sticks"): the upper his father and the lower his mother (or, alternately, both his mothers). He is called *sūnuḥ sahasaḥ* ("son of strength"), literally, the product of powerful friction produced by the hands of the priest or, figuratively, a manifestation of a victoriously procreative cosmic power.

By far the single most significant element in Agni's personality is his priesthood. As fire he must officiate at every sacrifice; thus he is not only the divine counterpart of the human priest but also the prototype for and most eminent exemplar of all priestly activities, especially that of the *hotṛ* priest, the reciter of the liturgy. Moreover, the mediatorial nature of Agni's office charges him with the safe transport of offerings to the gods and, in return, blessings to man. Since successful travel as messenger *(dūta)* between earthly petitioners and heavenly benefactors is insured by priestly eloquence, a quality derived from a combination of skill in language and insight into the cosmic mysteries, Agni is not only the preeminent priest but the preeminent seer *(kavi)* as well.

Agni's personality stresses certain key functions that come to be referred to by a system of epithets. Vaiśvānara, the fire with power over all men, for example, represents both the fire become sun during the liturgical magic of dawn and, supported by the Mātariśvan myth, the ritual fire as symbol of Aryan superiority, protecting and empowering the nation against all enemies. As a civilizing agent, Vaiśvānara represents man's control over light, warmth, and the demarcation of time (Agni as sun) as well as his concern for national boundaries and the establishment of an unrivaled peace (Agni against the barbarians). Jātavedas, the fire in possession of the creatures, stresses Agni's function as keeper of the Vedic family and preeminent advocate of man, for his unbroken ritual presence, his service in strengthening and uplifting the domestic community, and his role (via the cremation fire) in guaranteeing the proper transformation of the deceased into an ancestor make him the supreme guardian of the generations as well as the perpetuator of Aryan culture. Again, Apāṃ Napāt, the fire as child of the waters, stresses both the vital and procreative powers of natural water and the intoxicating and transformative powers of ritual water.

In the Brāhmaṇas, Agni's central relation is to Prajāpati, and the joint figure Agni-Prajāpati becomes the cosmic person who is projected into being through dismemberment. The various "searches" for Agni (see, for example, his flight in *Ṛgveda* 10.51) culminate in the ritual collection and reassembly of Agni (as sacrificer and cosmos) in the Agnicayana and serve to reaffirm the

presence of fire in every element. Moreover, in *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 1.4.1.10ff., Agni appears as Vaiśvānara and is carried in the mouth of Māthava, king of Videgha, toward the east. Jumping from the king's mouth at the mention of butter, Vaiśvānara burns his way to the Sadānīrā River, indicating by this the contemporary extent of the Brahmanic *yajña* ("worship"). In the Upaniṣads, Agni is identified with various aspects of the all-pervading *brahman*, and in the Purāṇas, notably the *Agni Purāṇa*, Agni is identified with the high god. In spite of this, however, and despite examples of known iconographical representations of Agni (particularly in stone), the extent of his worship in the later theistic context is marginal.

Heat and the Ascetic Tradition. With the shift in emphasis from sacrifice to sacrificer in the Brāhmaṇa period, the abstract qualities of the fire's "heat" *(tapas)* become interiorized: the heat of the flame, of Soma, of the priest's sweat, and of the cooked food become part of an internal sacrifice within the body *(antaryajña)* of the "patron become priest." What was in the period of the Brāhmaṇas the elaborate fire ritual *(agnihotra)* becomes in the ascetic tradition the "interiorized fire ritual" *(antaragnihotra)*. As man himself is identified with the sacrificial process and with the cosmos, an elaborate system of correspondences is set up homologizing the microcosmic fires of man's body with the macrocosmic fires of the universe, the whole system manipulable through the asceticism of yoga. The long-haired ascetic *(muni)*, first seen holding fire and riding the wind in *Ṛgveda* 10.136, now becomes the ascetic thoroughly possessed by Agni: in his head is the fire of mind and speech, in his arms the fire of sovereign power, and in his belly and loins the fire of productivity.

[*For further discussion of Agni and fire worship in Indo-Iranian religions, see* Fire. *See also* Vedism and Brahmanism.]

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ELLISON BANKS FINDLY

AGNOSTICISM. *See* Doubt and Belief.

AGNŌSTOS THEOS. The phrase *agnōstōn theōn* (nominative singular, *agnōstos theos*) was found inscribed on Greek altars dedicated "to the unknown gods." The inscription had no mystical or theosophical meaning, but arose out of a concern for cultic safety: no one wanted to incur the wrath of gods whose names were unknown but who just might exist and be vexed by the lack of honors.

The meaning of the designation *agnōstos* is indeed ambiguous: it could mean "unknowable" or "unknown," depending upon the context. God could in fact be "unknown" without necessarily being "unknowable." Even from a philosophical standpoint, "unknowable" does not require an absolute or irreconcilable meaning. God can be unknowable by the ordinary means of cognition or by discursive reason yet still be knowable by means of divine grace in contemporary or mystical intuition. This semantic uncertainty beclouds our understanding of the ancient usage.

The distinguished philologist Eduard Norden (1913) attempted to show that the notion of *agnōstos theos* was foreign and even contrary to the Classical Greek spirit. The term did not appear until late in the Classical period, and then only in texts clearly under Oriental influence: Jewish, gnostic, Neoplatonic, and Christian writings. Further, the expression would imply "a renunciation of inquiry" (p. 84) that would ill accord with Hellenic speculation.

Hellenic and Hellenistic Paganism. Most often, Greek gods are identified according to geographical location and function by epithets that thus remove these gods from the category of "unknown" gods. To be sure, the gods belong to a world distinct from that of men, and possess a nature—immortal and blessed—that eludes the grasp of human understanding, regardless of the anthropomorphic images that make them physically resemble their worshipers. In their cult, however, the Greeks were concerned only with the names and the spheres of action of these superior beings, for the purpose of invoking them with some degree of effectiveness. The phrase *agnōstōn theōn* was found on two altars observed by Pausanias, one at Phaleron, the other at Olympia. The apostle Paul employed the singular

when citing the inscription on an Athenian altar as he argued on behalf of monotheism (Norden, 1913, pp. 55–56). Still, there is no evidence of any cult rendered to an unknown god, nor to an unknowable one. The reconstruction that Hugo Hepding propounded for an inscription found at Pergamum that supposedly dealt with "unknown gods" was rebutted by Otto Weinreich (1915, p. 29). The *Alexander Romance* 1.33 attributes to the conqueror of Asia the erection of an altar "to the unknown god," but this detail lacks historical value (ibid., p. 28).

Philosophers have raised the question of the knowability or unknowability of God. Yet the famous statement from Plato (*Timaeus* 28c), often quoted and commented upon, addresses the ineffability of the creator god, which does not rule out that one might be able to conceive of him and to know him intuitively (Plato, *Epinomis* 7.342c–d) or analogously (*Republic* 6.506e–509a). Nevertheless in *Parmenides* (142a), Plato writes of the One who is "neither named . . . nor known." The distinction between divine power that manifests itself to men and divine being that eludes them, just like the sun that one cannot look at without being blinded, is implied by Xenophon (*Memorabilia* 4.3.13–14). Further, the distinction between existence and essence, common among Stoics, originates with Aristotle and perhaps with the doctrine of the Sophists (Festugière, 1950–1954, vol. 4, p. 16), yet the expression *agnōstos theos* still does not appear in these contexts. Damascius applies it to an Orphic text that appears to be among the most ancient: it had been quoted by Eudemus of Rhodes, a disciple of Aristotle. But Damascius rewrites Orphism in his own fashion. Even though born of the Night, this ineffable and unknowable god derives from Neoplatonism.

The Platonic tradition of the imperial Roman epoch limits the experience of the first god, ineffable and accessible, to the human intellect alone. Numenius (frag. 26) attributes to Plato the idea that only the demiurge is known to men, "while the first Intellect, the one that contains the name 'Being' within itself, remains totally unknown to men." Norden (1913) and H. J. Krämer (1963) discern gnostic influences here. However, Numenius remains faithful to the Platonic concept of the Nous as the suprarational faculty of mystical contemplation, as well as to the idea of the Good, the greatest object of knowledge.

According to Proclus (*Elements of Theology* 123), "everything divine . . . is ineffable and *agnōston*"; that is, by surpassing the range of language, the divine lies beyond the scope of discursive reasoning. Yet Proclus's entire body of work proves that he was seeking to know God. The Unknown Father of the Neoplatonist Marti-

anus Capella corresponds to the First Intellect of Numenius and to the God of Plato. Like Albinus and Numenius, the Latin Neoplatonist seems to think that, thanks to the Mens (identical with the Greeks' Nous), the supreme god can be conceived through mystical intuition. Damascius starts by affirming the unknowability of God, yet specifies that it is necessary to empty one's intellect so that the subject can blend with the object by removing any barrier, through *aphairesis*.

In Hermetism several contradictory currents intersect. In principle, the All that is God "is perceivable and knowable only to himself" (*Asclepius* 34). Although he cannot be comprehended or defined, he wants to be known and thus makes himself known as God. It is entirely characteristic of the Good to be known and recognized, and to ignore him is impious. He becomes visible "to the intellect and the heart" through an interior illumination (Festugière, 1950–1954, vol. 4, pp. 241ff.). Indeed, one must become God in order to attain the happiness of this "gnosis," one must become "divinized" or regenerated. [*See* Deification.]

Hellenistic Judaism. One of the earliest literal appearance of *agnōstos theos* is that in Josephus Flavius (*Against Apion* 2.167): Moses, he states, showed us that God is "knowable by his power, but unknowable in his essence." In saying this, Josephus was not relying directly on Jewish tradition. (The Septuagint makes no distinction between the existence of God, manifested by the created world, and his essence.) He refers instead to the "wisest of the Greeks . . . Pythagoras, Anaxagoras, Plato, the philosopher of the Portico." The distinction was common among the Stoics, who derived it from Aristotle. It was employed whenever anyone would comment on the ancient philosophers (whence the reference to Pythagoras, Anaxagoras, and Plato).

Nonetheless, the Stoics tended to put more emphasis on the god manifested through creation. Taking a different stance, Philo Judaeus stresses in several places that it is impossible for man to grasp the invisible and incorporeal essence of God. Moses, after all, halted after being blinded by the divine beams. God made himself visible to Abraham, but man has no faculty of his own for experiencing the absolute being. The inaccessibility of the *agnōstos theos* appears to be more radical in the Jewish tradition than in most developed Hellenistic speculations. It cannot be said, however, that the notion of *agnōstos theos* itself is of Oriental origin.

Gnosticism. The unknown god is a fundamental theme of gnosticism. During the second century CE, the teaching of philosophers upheld the divine transcendence by making a distinction between the Demiurge, perceptible in his cosmic creation, and the supreme Intellect, inaccessible to the human intellect. This distinc-

tion was furthered by the gnostics, who perceived an opposition between the knowable and the unknowable. The transcendent god appeared to be a stranger to the universe, concealed from the creator god as well as from his creatures (Hippolytus, *Philosophuma* 6:33; *Gospel of Truth* 18.7–14). This is the Unknown Father or the *Propator* of the angels and archangels (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.19; 1.23.2). It is also the "good god" of Marcion—"naturaliter . . . ignotus" (Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 5.16.3). The Son reveals the Father whom "no one knows." According to the Valentinians, the Unknown Father makes himself known to the aeons by ways of Monogenes (his "only begotten"). In the beginning, the angels and archangels do not know who has created them, and their ignorance of the Father causes fear and terror among them (*Gospel of Truth* 17.9–16). Yet in arousing this inner crisis (which the gnostics express in terms of a mythico-allegorical drama), this essentially forbidding transcendence of the Father forces them into a search for salvation through gnosis, through knowledge of the Unknowable (Jonas, 1963, pp. 257f., 404ff.). This gnosis of the *agnōstos* does not proceed directly by way of reason. Certain sects employed a ritual of initiation, or mystagogy (Tröger, 1971, p. 69): the Marcionites baptized neophytes "in the name of the Unknown Father." Yet in general it is God who reveals himself. Thus a Coptic hymn addresses God: "No one can know you against your will." Gnosis proceeds not from the knowing subject but from divine grace.

Christianity. In his sermon to the Athenians (*Acts* 17:23), Paul claims that he is proclaiming to them the God whom they honor without knowing him. Paul emphasized the basic meaning of a dedication that was written in the plural (to the *agnōstōn theōn*) in a way that was consistent with his doctrine of the mystery made known to men by the Christ. In the *Clementine Homilies* (18.18), Peter interprets *Isaiah* 1:31 ("Israel has not known me") in a way that rebuts the argument of the Marcionites: the Jews ignored the justice of the known God! Clement of Alexandria (*Miscellanies* 5.12.78.1–3) comments on the unknown god of *Acts* by referring to Plato (*Timaeus* 28c). Yet the statement by Christ in *Matthew* 11:27 ("No one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son") legitimized the Valentinian conception of the Unknown Father and might be seen as encouraging ignorance about God. Paul reproached the pagans for this ignorance, which he condemned as an unpardonable fault (*1 Cor.* 15:34, *Rom.* 1:20, *Eph.* 4:18, *Acts* 17:30). Christ had left men with no excuse for ignorance, since he was the visible image of the invisible God and the revealer of the divine mystery (*Col.* 1:15).

Nevertheless, the Fathers of the church were fond of quoting Plato in order to show that the philosopher urged pagans to seek out the unknown god. The Fathers would also set the religious knowledge of the lowliest Christian in contrast to the idle uncertainties of the learned. They also at the same time readily stressed the unknowability of God: he is known to us only through himself in all his grandeur; he is "beyond the understandable," incomprehensible, indeed beyond being in itself. Yet divine grace and the Word allow men to conceive the unknown. The patristic tradition is practically unanimous in recognizing Christ as a type of hierophant of divine mysteries.

There is, however, a line of thought of Neoplatonic inspiration that legitimizes negative theology. [*See* Via Negativa.] The hymn to God by Gregory of Nazianzus, improperly attributed to Proclus, proclaims him to be the "only unknowable" while still being the creator of all that are knowable. Synesius of Cyrene exalts the Unknown Father, unknowable to reason and ineffable. For Dionysius the Areopagite (*Mystical Theology* 2), it is a matter of knowing an "unknowing" *(agnōsia)*; in his view, Paul knew God as "transcending every mode of knowledge" (*Patrologia Graeca* 3.1073a). Thus Maximus the Confessor could write, "Even when known, he remains the Unknown." He is the *Deus absconditus* who, were it otherwise, would not be God.

[*See also* Transcendence and Immanence.]

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Translated from French by Paul C. Duggan

AGŌGĒ, a Greek singular noun derived from the verb *agō* ("to lead"), can be used to denote the leading by the hand of horses. In human terms, *agōgē* was used by the Spartans and the inhabitants of the island of Chios to denote the process by which their youths were "domesticated." In other words, the youths were considered to be similar to wild foals and fillies and had to be "broken" before they could enter adult society. Since this view of youths was widely shared in Greece, the term *agōgē* can be usefully employed as a rubric for examination of initiatory rituals and customs in ancient Greece.

At one time, during the Archaic period (eighth–sixth centuries BCE), initiatory rituals existed all over Greece. However, by the beginning of the Classical period (fifth–fourth centuries BCE), these rites had vanished from most urbanized Greek societies or had been reduced to a few ceremonies. Only at the margin of the Greek world, on the conservative island of Crete, did men's associations still convene in men's houses and supervise proper rites of initiation—at least until the fourth century BCE. Here, young boys had to serve at the meals in the men's houses, their low status being stressed by shabby clothes and seats on the floor. After this period of informal education, sons of aristocrats recruited boys of lower social standing to form bands, which were supervised by their fathers. These bands were trained in hunting, dancing, singing, fighting, and, a modernization, letters. Having finally passed through a short homosexual affair with a more recently initiated lover, each aristocratic youth received a military suit, a special dress, and a drinking cup, the tokens of adulthood. It still took a while, however, before the youth reached unqualified adulthood (perhaps at the age of thirty), but about this period we are not informed. When the boys left the initiatory bands, they were forced to marry *en masse*.

In Sparta, similar initiatory rites took place, but here the state supervised the youths' training, which was geared completely to the purpose of controlling the Helots, Sparta's subject population. Moreover, the Spartan system, the *agōgē*, had been extended by the introduction of a long series of age-classes. (Rites of initiation can always be contracted or prolonged, depending on a given society's needs.) In Athens, the original initiatory structure had disintegrated in the course of the sixth century BCE with the decline of aristocratic power. Nevertheless, from the exploits of Theseus (which reflect the life of an Athenian initiand), from various rituals, and from the later "national service" *(ephēbeia)*, we can still deduce the existence of an initiatory system comprising transvestism, trials of strength, running, pederasty, and a stay at the margin of Athenian society.

This evidence, coupled with scattered notices from other cities, suggests a picture of initiatory rituals that were once universal in Archaic Greece. These rituals were connected with a variety of divine figures such as local heroes, Hermes, Herakles, Zeus, and Poseidon. Apollo was especially important, since he supervised the final integration into adult society. [*See* Apollo.] The ubiquity of initiation is confirmed by Greek mythology in which initiatory themes—some no longer mentioned in the historical period—occur with astonishing frequency.

The prototype of the Greek mythological initiand was Achilles. He was educated by the centaur Chiron far from the civilized world; centaurs also figure as initiators of other Greek heroes, such as Jason. Chiron instructed Achilles in hunting, music, and medicine, and he gave him his name, his first name being Ligyron. Subsequently, Achilles spent time on the remote island of Skyros, dressed as a girl. In the Trojan War, he was the foremost Greek hero; late versions of the myth even claim that he was invulnerable. Finally, he was killed, through the intervention of Apollo. The structure of this myth clearly reflects male initiation rites: the education in the bush, the change of name, and the transvestism; further, the heroic feats combined with the theme of invulnerability suggest a kind of martial ecstasy that was also expected from youth on the brink of adulthood among other Indo-European peoples. [*See* Poseidon.] The death through the initiatory god Apollo suggests the "death" of the initiand before his rebirth as an adult.

Other heroes' lives also display the characteristics of an initiatory scenario. Perseus travels to a marginal area to acquire a special weapon in order to kill a monster. Oedipus is educated far from home, passes the tests of the Sphinx, and then gains the hand of the queen-widow. Jason is educated by Chiron, who also gave him his name. Having collected a band of followers (cf. the Cretan rites), he performs valiant deeds with the Argonauts before returning home to become a king.

Besides these pan-Hellenic myths, there were many local heroes who served as initiatory models for youths. One example out of many: in Cretan Phaistos, it was

said that Leukippos (Leucippus), although born as a girl, had changed into a man when he reached adolescence. This myth was the *aition* for the Ekdusia ("the shedding of clothes"), the festival of Leto, mother of Apollo and Artemis. Evidently, it was a festival that celebrated the end of initiation when boys shed their female clothes (dramatized in the myth as a sex change) in order to assume proper male ones. Many such local initiatory myths were recorded in Hellenistic and Roman times long after the corresponding rites had disappeared.

Whereas boys were educated to become warriors, girls were trained for marriage. In Sparta, one of the few places about which we possess a fair amount of information, scantily clad girls started their initiation at the margin of Spartan territory in the sanctuaries of Artemis, the main Greek goddess of girls' education. [*See* Artemis.] Here, besides physical exercises, they were instructed through music and dancing in choruses. Evidence from other cities such as Athens confirms that this was the custom all over Greece. Girls were considered to be like wild animals that had to be tamed (they were called "bears" in Athens). This is reflected in mythology where the names of girls such as the Leukippides and Hipponoe suggest that girls were compared to wild mares who had to be domesticated.

During their final training for motherhood, aristocratic girls in Sparta had to pass through a lesbian affair, as they did on the island of Lesbos, where Sappho instructed groups of aristocratic girls. In this period, special stress was laid on enhancing their physical beauty, so that their marriages would be successfully consummated. Consequently, this period was closely connected with the cult of the beautiful Helen, who was worshiped as a goddess in Sparta. In fact, in a number of Greek cities a beauty contest constituted the end of girls' initiation. The protection of Artemis lasted until the birth of the first child, for motherhood, not loss of virginity, was the definitive entry into the world of adult women.

Many details of Greek girls' training can be found in the myths concerning Artemis, even though they tend, as myths so often do, to concentrate on the most dramatic part of the story: the final entry into marriage. The "taming" of a girl is expressed in a number of myths that all circle around her resistance to "domestication." The pursuit of the Proetides, the capture of Thetis by Peleus or of Persephone by Hades, the races to win Atalante, and even the capture of Helen by Paris—all these myths are concerned with the perceived resistance of girls to enter wedlock. Greek mythology is very much a man's world.

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The pioneer study of Greek initiation is Henri Jeanmaire's *Couroi et courètes* (Lille, 1939), and the standard study is now Angelo Brelich's *Paides e parthenoi* (Rome, 1969). Both Jeanmaire and Brelich base their analyses on comparisons with the ethnological evidence. My article "An Enigmatic Indo-European Rite: Paederasty," *Arethusa* 13 (1980): 279–298, is a detailed study of the role of pederasty in the initiatory rituals. Claude Calame's *Les chœurs de jeunes filles en Grèce archaïque*, 2 vols. (Rome, 1977), is a detailed study of the girls' initiation. Fritz Graf's "Die lokrischen Mädchen," *Studi storico-religiosi* 2 (1978): 61–79, is an exemplary discussion of one complex of initiatory myth and ritual.

JAN BREMMER

AGRICULTURE, the cultivation of plants for food and other ends, as opposed to the use of plants as they grow naturally in man's environment, is a rather recent phenomenon if considered relative to the time scale of the development of *Homo sapiens*. Scholars now agree in dating the most ancient archaeological traces of plant cultivation to the eighth or seventh millennium BCE and in indicating not the valleys of the Tigris-Euphrates and Nile, where the most ancient urban civilizations are attested, but the higher lands lying both west and east of Mesopotamia as the original cradles of agriculture. The Natufian culture of Palestine and other similar communities and cultural complexes in Kurdistan (Zawi Chemi Shanidar) and northern Iraq (Karim Shahir) used noncultivated (wild) wheat and barley.

The first traces of agriculture proper are found in sites such as Jericho (c. 7500 BCE), Jarmo (Iraqi Kurdistan), Tepe Sarab (Iranian Kurdistan), and Çatal Hüyük (Anatolia) and can be dated to the seventh millennium at the latest; the Palestinian early agrarian culture of the Yarmuk basin and the cultures of Al-Fayyūm (Egypt) and of Tepe Siyalk (Iran) probably belong to the sixth millennium. Some scholars consider the oldest agricultural communities of eastern Europe to be almost as ancient as these Asian civilizations; recently traces of very early plant cultivation (peas, beans, etc.) have been found in Thailand.

The introduction of agriculture is not an isolated phenomenon. It develops with the beginnings of animal domestication and with a growth both in the population in general and in the size of settlements (some of the early agricultural settlements of the cultures cited above, such as Jericho in Palestine, cover a wide area, are fortified, and contain towers and buildings constructed for collective, ceremonial use). The origin of

agriculture is also linked to the invention of pottery and to more sophisticated techniques for making stone tools and weapons, although these last innovations are not always synchronic with the introduction of cultivation. Although the term *Neolithic revolution*, made popular by V. Gordon Childe, expresses well the enormous importance of this series of radical innovations, the process was a slow one, extending across several millennia. According to recent studies, the history of early forms of cultivation can be divided into three long phases: (1) the final phase of the gathering economy; (2) the beginnings of plant cultivation and of animal domestication; and (3) the era of efficient village agriculture.

Although the beginnings of cultivation must be identified with the process just described, which took place in a small area of Asia and Europe and involved the domestication of wild cereals, in premodern times the cultivation of plants had already spread to all continents, and the Neolithic revolution had taken place in most of the inhabited world. At the beginning of the modern era, cultivation was present in the indigenous cultures of all lands, with the exceptions of Australia, the Arctic (for obvious climatic reasons), a wide part of North America (the central Great Plains, inhabited only recently by the buffalo-hunting Plains Indians), and smaller, isolated parts of other continents (usually those areas covered with tropical or equatorial forests and inhabited by bands of hunter-gatherers). Scholars still debate whether the presence of plant cultivation throughout the globe should be considered the result of a process of diffusion from the most ancient cradle of agriculture in the Old World or the result of a series of independent inventions. However this question is approached, one should keep in mind that cultivation is far from uniform and is far from corresponding everywhere to the model of cerealiculture in Europe and western Asia. Indeed, if we leave aside the relatively recent modifications brought about by European colonization of other continents, six geographical, ecological, and cultural zones can be distinguished according to the types or groups of plants cultivated. The zones are as follows:

1. wheat zone: from Europe to China; secondary cereals: barley, spelt, oats; instrument: the plow
2. rice zone: from India to Indonesia to southern China; instruments: plow and hoe
3. millet and sorghum zone: sub-Saharan Africa; instrument: hoe
4. yam and taro zone: New Guinea, Melanesia, Polynesia; secondary plants: coconut palm, sago palm; instruments: digging stick and hoe
5. maize zone: America, from eastern North America through Central America and the Andes to northern Chile and Argentina; secondary plants: in the north—beans and pumpkins; in the south—potato and quinoa; instruments; digging stick and spade
6. manioc (cassava) zone: Amazonian area and tropical America; secondary plants: peanuts, sweet potato; instruments: digging stick and spade

As is immediately clear, only zones 1, 2, 3, and 5 possess agricultural economies based mainly upon cereals, and zone 5 combines one cereal typical of the New World with other plants. Moreover, only zone 1 is exclusively based upon a technologically complex instrument, the plow, that requires the use of draft animals (bovines, horses, etc.). Today, of course, the situation is modified, mainly because Old World cereals have been diffused to the temperate zones of North America, whereas Oceanian and American plants (yam, maize, potato, sweet potato, peanuts, and cassava) have been introduced into Africa by European and Arab traders and colonists.

As for the problem of the origin of cultivation in areas outside the original western Asian–eastern European zone where cerealiculture began, there is increasing agreement on the common origin of the cultivation of cereals in the Old World (although older, more complex theories still have their followers). Specialists still disagree, however, on both the relationship between the origins of cultivation in the New and the Old World (a more recent, autonomous invention of cultivation in America seems more probable) and the relative ages of cereal and noncereal cultivation. According to some, the cultivation of noncereal plants (mainly tubers) is an impoverished imitation of cerealiculture, whereas other scholars consider the cultivation of noncereal plants to be older than cerealiculture. This last hypothesis seems more probably correct, at least in the case of some areas of the Americas. Excavations in Venezuela and in Colombia show that cassava was cultivated there long before maize; moreover, as mentioned earlier, very ancient traces of noncereal cultivation have been discovered in Thailand.

The importance of the slow technological and economic (Neolithic) revolution that led many societies from a hunting and gathering economy to plant cultivation and animal husbandry is indeed enormous; the only phenomenon we can compare it to is the great technological revolution of early modern times, which led many societies, in a much shorter timespan, into the modern industrial era. In transforming *Homo sapiens* from a mere consumer of natural goods into a producer, the development of agriculture drastically changed the role of humanity within its environment, and thus the

very nature of humankind. Moreover, it permitted a vast transformation of human life and activity, involving both a demographic increase and the rise of more complex human settlements and communities. Agriculture required an increasingly greater specialization, differentiation, and stratification within societies, and made possible and indeed necessary the "urban revolution" that was to follow within three or four millennia in Mesopotamia and Egypt. The consequences of this development in the domain of religious life were far greater than can be illustrated in this article, which deals exclusively with religious phenomena directly connected to cultivation. The historical roots of complex phenomena such as polytheism, the so-called gift-sacrifice, and priesthood, to name but three examples, lie in the humus prepared by the Neolithic revolution.

Our knowledge of the religiosity of Neolithic cultures is limited not only by an obvious factor, the lack of any written evidence, but also by a less obvious one, the abundance of totally conjectural modern "reconstructions," based upon archaeological data. Even more limiting are a misconceived comparison between modern "primitive" cultivators and the peasant cultures of more complex historical societies and the generalizations of nineteenth-century scholarship. The data furnished by sites such as Jericho (Palestine) and Çatal Hüyük and Hacilar (Anatolia) point to the cult of anthropomorphic, mainly female, beings of various types and to rituals of the dead (in particular to the preservation and treatment of human skulls), as well as to the importance of animals such as birds of prey, bulls, and leopards, often depicted in wall paintings. The cult was often domestic, but shrines of various sizes and shapes have been found, richly decorated with paintings and sculptures. The first monumental sanctuaries, however, seem to belong to the later, Mesopotamian culture of Al-Ubayyid, dated from the end of the fifth to the beginning of the fourth millennium.

The Ritual Calendar and the Great Feast. Although hunter-gatherer communities also organize their lives on a seasonal basis, the yearly rhythm of labors is vital to cultivators and implies both a cyclical perception of time and the necessity of organizing the yearly sequence with a new precision. [See Calendars.] The introduction of cultivation is thus historically connected to the introduction of a calendar that responds to the technological and ritual needs of that specific form of production. The ritual aspects of cultivation and the rhythmic periodicity of that economic form, in which periods of great abundance are followed by periods of scarcity, require strong differentiations in time and the concentration of ritual actions and festive behavior in specific, recurring periods or days of the year. The yearly

calendar of cultivators is thus a festive and ritual calendar.

The festive calendars of ancient societies, even though they are often connected with more complex liturgical, mythological, and even theological conceptions, as well as with "political" celebrations, easily reveal their agricultural basis. Thus, the three main Israelite feasts recorded in the Bible are a feast of the beginning of the barley harvest, a summer feast of the end of the wheat harvest (Shavu'ot), and an autumn feast of ingathering, celebrating the collecting and storing of (noncereal) cultivated fruits (Sukkot or Asif).

Likewise, the Attic calendar of Classical times included a feast preliminary to the plowing (Proerosia) immediately followed by the feast of the Boiling of Beans (Puanopsia), then by the ritual begging for gifts by children who carried a decorated branch of olive or laurel (eiresiōnē), and by processions of people carrying bunches of grapes hanging from their branches (Oscophoria) or other, less easily identified objects (Thesmophoria). The other main agricultural feasts of the Attic calendar were the spring festival of flowers and new wine (Anthesteria), the wine festival of Dionysos (Dionusia), the feasts of purification and offerings in preparation for harvesting (Thargelia), and the sacrifice of a plow ox at the time of harvest (Bouphonia).

The Roman archaic calendar includes a series of spring feasts dedicated to the worship of agrarian deities (in March and April: Liberalia, Consualia, Vinalia Priora, Robigalia); a series of spring purification rites, connected to the return of the dead and to the gathering of broad beans (in May: purification fields, Lemuria, Kalendae Fabariae); summer festivals connected with the harvesting and with the new wine (in August: Vinalia Rustica, feast of Opeconsiva); a series of winter feasts of the plowing season (from 15 to 21 December: Consualia, Saturnalia, Opalia, Divalia, Larentalia); a winter feast for the protection of sown cereals (in January: Feriae Sementivae); and a winter month of purification of people and fields (in February).

The agricultural origin of most yearly festivals in modern, as well as in ancient, cultivating societies can just as easily be demonstrated. Here it suffices to cite the great Indian festivals of Dussehra and Dīvālī; the former marks the end of the rainy season and the beginning of agricultural labors and is concluded by a ritual quest for alms by people carrying small fresh shoots of barley plants, while the latter is a New Year–like festival celebrating the sowing of the winter crops.

The agricultural and festive calendars of cultivators outside of the wheat zone are no less rich and complex. The structure of the calendar and the types of festivals vary according to the ecological and climatic condi-

tions, the types of plants cultivated, and the cultural and social structure of the various societies, as is shown by the following three examples.

The Arapesh of northeastern New Guinea, who now cultivate a wide range of plants of various origins, are ruled by an archaic ritual calendar that is based on the cultivation of yams and reflects a time system simpler than the one now in use for cultivation. The main feast, the Abullu, is based upon the exhibition of each cultivator's yam produce, followed by the performance of special Abullu dances and songs, which center on the most recent death of an important member of the community, and by the distribution of yams to the guests by each producer. The producer may not consume the yams himself and must be ritually purified before the feast, for he is considered to be in a state similar to that of parents immediately after childbirth.

The rice-growing Ao-Naga of northeastern India have a complex festive calendar with three main feasts. The Moatsu feast, celebrated at the end of the sowing period, is preceded by a night of sexual abstinence and consists of a ritual suspension of order (the rigid rules relative to clothing and ornaments are not enforced; no Ao-Naga can be fined for transgression) and of the renewal of the belts that hold the men's *dao* ("daggers"). The Aobi feast precedes the beginning of the agricultural labors, and marks the end of the period during which the Ao-Naga travel and trade. Its central feature is the explusion of impurities from the village, both through the disposal of the garbage collected from the various households by a priest and by the symbolic concentration of impurities on the first stranger who enters the village area. Finally, the end of the agricultural labors is marked by a feast, called Tsungremmung, mainly dedicated to the worship of beings called *tsungrem*. The greatest of the *tsungrem*, Lichaba, a creator figure, is the main recipient of the festive offerings; pieces of pork are left out for him to consume in all the dwellings that are located at the edges of the village.

The Venda of Transvaal, in South Africa, cultivate maize and other plants (sweet potatoes, beans, pumpkins, melons) of various types and origins. Their main festivals celebrate the sowing and the harvesting. Before the sowing, each cultivator sends a small amount of mixed seeds to the lineage chief, who prepares a sacred food by cooking all the seeds together; the food is then offered to the ancestors, and a rich harvest is asked of them. A similar rite takes place in the chief's field, with the participation of the whole community; on their way to the field the young girls collect firewood to cook the offering, and beat whomever they meet with rods (the rods may be a fertility symbol). The chief announces the beginning of the harvesting. There was a

time when anyone who began harvesting before the announcement would be killed. The chief celebrates a private rite; a "public" rite then takes place in the chief's field, and each lineage celebrates its own rite in the lineage chief's field. The preliminary rites consist of an offering of sugar cane to the sacred animals and of preparation of beer by women. The young people then perform a sacred dance; the sacred bull and its cow are led into the chief's kraal and asperged with beer, while the *makhadzi* (the sister of the former chief) recites a prayer to the ancestors, saying: "I give you the first grains of the yearly harvest; eat and be well; but what is now still in the fields, you should leave to us." Listing all the names of ancestors she can remember, the *makhadzi* adds that the prayer is also directed to those ancestors whose names have been forgotten. The tombs and the places where the spirits of the dead dwell are then ceremoniously visited, and offerings are left in special places for the wild animals (leopards, serpents, etc.) into which the dead are believed to be transformed.

The Venda's harvest rituals are typical of the most important and widespread agricultural feast: the feast of harvesting and of first fruits. This is first of all a feast of abundance after the long months of working and of waiting, of success after the yearly risks and dangers represented by the uncertainties of rainfall and weather. Thus, it is celebrated by more or less unrestricted license and by excessive consumption. At the same time, it is a moment of great crisis, both because it causes excessive consumption and suspends productive work and because of the risk that accompanies any liminal period as, specifically, the consumption of the first products of the year's labor. The great feast of abundance and license is thus also celebrated with "protective" rituals, such as ritual consecration of first fruits, purification and renewal of the community, and offerings and sacrifices (sometimes human sacrifice, as for example among the Aztec of Mexico or the Dravidian Khond of eastern India) to various entities.

The consumption of the first part of the new harvest involves the end of a seasonal cycle of cultivation and the beginning of a new one, and thus a renewal of time: the harvest festival is a New Year feast, and the festive sacrifice is seen as a cosmogonic act. In the great feast, the whole world starts afresh, so that order is often ritually suspended, only to be reinstated, as happened at the beginning of time.

This suspension (and reinstatement) of the social and cosmic order is the profound religious meaning of an important aspect of many seasonal festivals of cultivators and, in particular, of harvest festivals: the ritual orgy. Indeed, if envisaged in this context of periodic "rebirth," the orgy is a temporary suspension of the nor-

mal order of a given society in favor of an "excessive" collective behavior (music, dance, banqueting, sexual intercourse) that is meant to sanction the festive period and to renew and reinforce the vital energies of the social group. Orgiastic behavior on special or festive occasions is attested among all societies, but orgies have a specific importance and a particular meaning for cultivators. Alimentary orgies are extremely frequent and important; they are most often a celebration of the harvest, a ritual response to the sudden and disconcerting abundance of food after the long months of efforts and risks. Sexual orgies are also frequent (they are attested among many societies of cultivators, from the Melanesian cultivators of tuberous plants to the cerealiculturalists of the Old World), and are connected with the harvest festivals (e.g., among the Fijians during the Nanga and Mbaki feast), with (spring) festivals of the growth of vegetation (e.g., in ancient China, in India during the Holī festival or during Dīvālī), and with planting or sowing (e.g., among the Pipil of Central America). Although it maintains its fundamental quality as a ritual disruption of order and as a temporal heightening of social and individual life rhythms, the sexual orgy of cultivators also reflects the solidarity between human sexuality and fecundity and the fertility of cultivated plants that constitutes one of the central beliefs of those societies; the orgy possesses the specific function of revitalizing the forces of vegetation. In this sense, it is a collective counterpart of the "hierogamy" (ritual intercourse or marriage between humans or symbolic figures to enhance vegetal reproduction and growth during critical moments of the agrarian year).

Just as all agricultural and horticultural labors have a ritual aspect or value, the festivals of cultivators, and the harvest festivals in particular, are an integral part of agricultural activities, and are organized as an aspect of the general economic activity of the social body. This is emblematically clear, to cite but one example, among the matrilinear maize cultivators of what is today New York State, the Iroquois of the Six Nations, whose agricultural economy has recently been reconstructed. Among the Iroquois, at harvesttime labor was distributed among three different groups of women. One group collected the maize ears in baskets, a second group transported the cereal produce to the storage places, where it was buried in underground pits, and a third group prepared the harvest festival. A part of the labor force employed in the harvesting was thus devoted to the preparation of the feast, in which the men also took part before leaving the village for long hunting expeditions in the forests.

The unity of productive and ritual activity, and of the seasonal-technical and the festive-ritual calendars, was thus complete in all archaic communities of cultivators. In medieval and modern times, especially in the wheat zone, this situation was increasingly modified by the development of the liturgical calendars of the great "universal" religions (notably Christianity and Islam), which were partly independent of the seasonal pattern of agriculture, and later of the "lay" festive calendars. In this area, however, a specifically agricultural perception of time continued to exist side by side with the official calendars, and interacted with them dialectically. The new religions either accepted and transformed or rejected and tried to abolish the traditional rituals and feasts. A good example of this complex situation is the traditional festive calendar of European peasants. This calendar is the result of a complex interaction of an archaic agricultural festive system and Christian liturgy. [*See also* Seasonal Ceremonies.]

Figures and Deities. The offerings cited above in connection with some agrarian festivals are examples of an extremely widespread typology of sacrificial offerings, ritual acts, and propitiatory prayers directed toward extrahuman entities of various kinds that are believed to embody, or to control, the outcome of the labors of cultivation and the abundance of the harvest. Such beings or entities can be classified into four main categories: (1) nonpersonified forces or (less correctly) "spirits" that are believed to be active in the very growth and nourishing properties of cultivated plants; (2) personified beings of different kinds, believed to embody, or to cause and control, the growth of specific cultivated plants or, more generally, the produce of cultivation; (3) polytheistic gods and goddesses who, within the context of the various pantheons, are believed to control certain aspects of the agricultural economy; (4) figures who, within "universal" and "founded" (often monotheistic) religions, are believed to influence aspects of the agricultural economy or the outcome of cultivation in a context in which the total control over reality (and thus also over agriculture) is often attributed to a single principle or deity.

The last two categories are most often historically derived from the second. The polytheistic deities, however, are more completely integrated within a unified religiosity, and constitute parts of a system of specialized extrahuman personalities. They may be officially in charge of cerealiculture (e.g., the ancient Greek goddess Demeter) or of such a specific aspect as the diseases of wheat and barley plants (e.g., the Roman deity Robigo), but in all cases they are tied to all the other deities of their specific pantheon by genealogical, mythological, and ritual bonds. The entities who preside over aspects of cultivation within "founded" religions may be secondary figures of the belief system of those religions

(such as angels, saints, or in some Christian contexts, the Virgin Mary), or else figures who clearly belong to a noncanonical, folkloric religiosity and resemble strikingly the entities and figures of the first and second types in our typology. Both types, however, are marginal to the central body of belief, and their diffusion is limited, both geographically (to specific rural zones within the wide diffusion areas of the "great" religions) and socially (to the peasantry).

The existence of belief in the power of cultivated vegetation (our first category) is usually deduced from a series of ritual behaviors that has been interpreted as tending to act positively upon such a power. Such is the ritual treatment of the first or last sheaf of grain among European and other cerealiculturists. In some cases, the ritually important (first or last) sheaf of the harvest is avoided by the cultivators, in others, it is eagerly sought after. In some cases, it is taken to the farm or settlement with great ritual pomp; in other cases, it is thrown away. This ambivalence, according to Mircea Eliade, is a consequence of the ambivalent meaning of the chosen sheaf, which is both dangerous and precious because it symbolically contains or embodies the power of the harvested cereal. According to peasants of northern Europe (Finland, Estonia, Germany), the ritually chosen sheaf brings good luck and blessings to the household, protects from diseases and lightning, and keeps mice away from the harvested grain. The sheaf can be used for divination of the marriages of young women (Estonia) or of the price of grain in the following year (Germany); it has magical properties in relationship to childbirth (Finland), marriage (Scotland), and next season's harvest, so that some grain from the last sheaf of the harvest is mixed with the seeds used for the next sowing (Scandinavia and Germany). The "power" of the cultivated plants is similarly enhanced by other (e.g., hierogamic) rituals.

Only very rarely, however, are beliefs and ritual behaviors of this type not connected with some specific personification of the beings believed to embody or to control the seasonal outcome of cultivation. Indeed, though the existence of the first category of our typology is generally accepted by scholars, it would be possible to reformulate that category in favor of a widened scope of and differentiation within our second category.

In any cae, the second category of our typology is extremely vast and varied and includes at least three main subcategories: (a) beings connected to, and representative of, specific cultivated plants, or the growth of cultivated vegetation in general; (b) earth-mother figures; (c) spirits of the dead or ancestors.

The first subtype is the most widespread and easily recognized. It is the nearest to the first category of our typology, and the extrahuman beings classified as belonging to this subtype are often represented by harvested plants (sometimes, the first or last or most beautiful plants of the harvest), often collected and tied together in the shape of a human (most often, a female) figure, kept until the next harvesting season, and ritually treated in various ways. Figures of this type are found on all continents. One may mention the Aztec maize goddess; the Maize Mother of pre-Columbian Peruvians, represented by a female image made with the biggest maize cobs of the harvest; the analogous Quinoa Mother, Coca Mother, and Potato Mother, all similarly represented by the same Peruvians; the various maize mothers, one for each type of maize, of the Pueblo Indians of the southwestern United States. The Karen of Burma invoke a personified "spirit of the rice"; the Minangkabau of Sumatra use special rice plants to represent the rice mother Indoea Padi; and rice mothers are known to the Tomori of Sulawesi and to the rice growers of the Malay Peninsula, who ritually treat the wife of the cultivator as a pregnant woman during the first three days after the storing of the rice. The agriculturalists of the Punjab fashioned a female figure from the most beautiful cotton plant of the harvest to represent the Cotton Mother. We have seen the ritual treatment and the magico-symbolic value of the last sheaf among the agriculturists of the wheat zone: the last sheaf, or a specially fashioned anthropomorphic image made of cereal stalks or straw, is identified in the same contexts as figures variously named Old Man (Denmark, Poland, Arabia Petraea), Queen of the Grain (Bulgaria), Old Woman (Germany, Scotland). The Berbers of Morocco used straw from the harvested fields to shape a female image they dressed in a woman's clothes that represented the Bride of the Barley.

Such figures, seemingly so similar, differ widely in their specific meanings and functions, as shown by the various roles they play in the ritual contexts. They may be believed to be entities responsible for growth of cultivated plants, and thus may be the recipients of offerings and prayers (Zara Mama, the maize mother of the Peruvians, for example, fashioned in the shape of a doll from cobs and dressed elegantly, was offered sacrifices and prayers). Or they may be believed to embody and to concentrate in themselves, rather than to control, that growth; in such cases they are ritually treated in various ways, the two most frequent and meaningful of which are the "death" pattern and the "wedding" pattern. The better known is the death pattern, which can be illustrated by the treatment of the last sheaf, identified as the Queen of Grain by the Bulgarians; the sheaf is dressed in a woman's clothes, carried around in a procession, and then burned and scattered in the fields

or thrown into a body of water. Such rituals are usually interpreted as dramatizing the seasonal cycle of cultivated plants, and their periodic "death" followed by their return or "rebirth" before the next harvesting—a theory shaped in the nineteenth century by James G. Frazer and Wilhelm Mannhardt. The wedding pattern is exemplified by the "marriage" of two fistfuls of rice, collected before the harvesttime, practiced on the islands of Java, Bali, and Lombok; the two fistfuls were treated like a pair of spouses, a wedding ceremony between them was celebrated, and then they were brought to the storehouse and stored there so that the rice could grow. Another example is that of the Barley Bride of the Berbers of Morocco. Groups of women completed for the honor of carrying the straw figure processionally through the ripe crops; on other occasions, the male members of the community appeared on horseback to fight for her, thus imitating scenes that were normal for Berber weddings, including a simulated abduction of the bride. In other areas, the two patterns appear together: in Denmark the female harvester dances with an image formed with the last sheaves; she cries while she dances, and is considered a "widow" because she is married to a being who is going to die.

If considered together, the various ritual treatments of the mythical figures embodying or controlling the outcome of cultivation clearly form a complex, well-structured strategic system aimed at controlling the uncertainties of the specific modes of production. The death and the wedding patterns, in particular, deal with the critical economic moment represented by the harvesting. The death pattern ritually enacts, and thus controls, the very crisis represented by the final moment of the cycle, symbolically overcome through the destruction, and ritual reintegration (by throwing it in the water or by spreading it on the fields) of the first (or last or "best") part of the produce of cultivation, which represents the cultivated plant or its "mother," "queen," "spouse," and so on. The wedding pattern ritually enacts, and thus controls, the positive outcome of the efforts and risks of cultivation, and thus performs a symbolic fecundation of the cultivated plant—and not just any fecundation, but a cultural one, sanctioned by a marriage ritual, just as the fertilization of cultivated plants is felt to be a highly cultural phenomenon. The dramatic importance of the crisis ritually enacted and controlled by the death pattern is further clarified by the fact that the death and burial of the representative of cultivated plants is often a symbolic but sometimes a real animal, or even human, ritual killing.

While the belief in "mother" figures who represent or control the reproductive power of the cultivated plants is typical of cultivator societies, belief in an earth mother is not limited to those societies. Indeed, the personification of the earth as a fecund mother, based on the simple symbolic connection between female animal (human) fecundity and the fertility of the earth from which the plants grow, is not unknown to hunter-gatherer societies. On the other hand, most of the data interpreted as pointing toward that belief are derived from beliefs and cultic practices pertaining to polytheistic religions; the goddesses interpreted as earth figures are usually complex deities, whose connection with the fertile earth is only one aspect of their personalities. Nevertheless, the earth complex, often coupled with a cult of the sky or of a sky figure as a fertilizing father (dispenser of rain) and with the equation between fecund women and the cultivated earth, is present in many cultivators' religions and survives in specific rituals (e.g., in formulaic prayers such as the Anglo-Saxon invocation to Herce or the pseudo-Homeric hymn to Gaia, a polytheistic goddess whose name means "earth," and who was invoked as a dispenser of crops). Earth-mother beliefs are especially important in the "wheat zone," where they are more central in cosmogonic and anthropogenic myths than in direct connection with agriculture. The fact that in many cultivating societies, and possibly in the distant origins of cultivation, women were in charge of the domesticated plants enhanced the association between the female sphere and the cultivated earth. A variety of female figures, whose sexuality and fecundity are strongly stressed, are usually referred to the earth mother complex; they appear in the Old World from Neolithic times to later antiquity in the form of statuettes or in paintings and reliefs on pottery and elsewhere. The most ancient and important documents pertaining to such figures may be the recently discovered paintings on the walls of a ceremonial building in the early agricultural settlement of Çatal Hüyük; but the female figures depicted in those paintings and in roughly contemporary statuettes from Çatal Hüyük and Hacilar are never clearly associated with symbols pointing to agriculture, but rather with animals such as vultures, leopards, and bulls.

In examining some examples of seasonal calendars pertaining to cultivators, we have mentioned the connection between the dead and the products of cultivation. The most meaningful and widespread example of such a connection is the belief in the return of the dead during the harvest festival or great feast among Melanesian and Polynesian yam and taro growers. The hungry dead are believed to invade the territory of the living in that festive time and are offered part of the produce. Similar connections between fertility feasts of agriculturalists and the return of the dead are not unknown to other societies of cultivators (e.g., the Christmas festiv-

ities of the northern European peasants involve both the dead and a celebration of fertility and life).

The offering of first fruits, or of parts of the produce of cultivation, to the returning dead has been interpreted by Vittorio Lanternari as a response to the periodic crisis represented by the sudden abundance of food, and by the suspension of the labors of cultivation after the harvesting. The earth, sacrilegiously tilled or dug by the cultivators, is seen as the home of the dead, who belong to a sphere that, like the virgin earth that must be "treated" by the cultivators, is foreign and uncontrolled. By offering a part of the produce to the returning dead the cultivators react to and control the seasonal crisis and risk. The dead, moreover, return collectively, because the work of the cultivators is collective; they return annually, at the end of the agrarian cycle. They enter the village because during the year the village has invaded the earth, their domain, to modify it; they are menacingly hungry because, to satiate their own hunger, the living have attacked the earth and shall attack it again the following year.

Although this is probably a correct interpretation of the widespread belief in a collective and periodical return of the dead in crucial moments of the seasonal calendar of cultivators, other data point to different views of the relationship of the dead with the cultivated plants. In particular, the strong connection between funerary, agrarian, and sexual rituals shows that the dead are often seen as active forces in the positive outcome of the labors of cultivation. The Bambara of Mali, West Africa, for example, pour water over the head of the dead person and implore him or her to send them a good harvest; the Finnish cerealiculturalists mix bones or objects belonging to the dead with the seed during the sowing and return the objects to the graveyard after the harvest, whereas German peasants similarly use soil they have dug out from a tomb. The equation between the seed or tuber, buried in the ground, and the dead, whose memory continues in the life of their progeny, is probably the basic concept underlying these and similar cases. The structure of the ancient Chinese peasant house described by Marcel Granet, with the inner section containing the stored grain, and near it the marriage bed of the couple and the burial place of the family ancestors, is the best synthetic representation of such a conception.

Origin Myths. The beliefs discussed so far, which shape the ritual aspect of the activities of cultivators, are expressed just as clearly in the myths traditionally related to account for the origins of cultivated plants or of the various techical and economic activities of cultivators, as well as to validate their cultural systems.

Some myths stress the symbolic correspondence between the cultivated plants and human beings and between sexual fecundity and vegetal fertility, the similarity between the techniques of cultivation and those of childraising, and the "motherly" quality of the cultivated earth. Others give more attention to the (miraculous) origin of the cultivated plants or techniques of cultivation. Among these last myths, Adolf E. Jensen distinguished two main, widespread types, attributing to cultivators of tuberous plants the type of myth that connects cultivation and death, mostly by recounting the birth of the cultivated plants from the body of a slain primordial being (the Hainuwele type) and attributing to cerealiculturalists myths of the theft of the basic cultivated cereals by primeval humankind. Jensen called the latter the Prometheus type, using the name of the Greek mythic figure Prometheus, who stole elements of human culture from the gods. But this rigid distinction should be abandoned, not only because the origin of cereals is often connected to a mythic killing (echoes of this are to be found, e.g., in the Osirian mythology of the Egyptians) but also, or rather especially, because the central theme of both these types, that of the primeval guilt connected by origin myths to the beginnings of cultivation, can be shown to be more richly differentiated. This theme includes at least (1) the killing of the primeval figure (Hainuwele type); (2) the stealing of the original cultivated plant (Prometheus type); and (3) the spying upon, and thus the offending of, a primeval generous female figure to whom the first introduction of cultivated plants or food is attributed.

Two myths of the Kiwai of New Guinea are good examples of the first type we have mentioned; they stress the earth-mother and plant-child symbolism. One of these myths tells of a woman named Opae, who gave birth but, having no husband and no idea of what a baby was, abandoned the child. A bird took care of it and protected its body and arms with taro leaves; later the bird came back with some taro bark and a taro root, covered the baby's body with the bark, and tied the root to its head. The root penetrated the ground and started to grow, and the baby's body was transformed into the first cultivated taro plant. The other Kiwai myth recounts the origin of yam cultivation. A man who had no wife dug a hole in the ground and had intercourse with the earth. But under the earth a woman was hidden, Tshikaro by name. She became pregnant, and, as is done with women at childbirth, she was surrounded by an enclosure made of mats (the mythic prototype of the enclosures protecting the yam gardens of the Kiwai) and gave birth to many yam tubers.

The most famous myth that connects cultivation and death by recounting the origin of the cultivated plants from the body of a slain primordial being is the Hainu-

wele myth of the islanders of Ceram (Indonesia), studied by Adolf E. Jensen and used by him as a prototype of this category. Hainuwele, a young maid, was killed, her body was cut in pieces, and the pieces were buried; from the various parts of her body, the various cultivated plants were born. The killing of Hainuwele gave rise not just to the plants, but in different ways to sexuality, to death, and to many cultural institutions. Myths of this type are present in all continents. An American example is the Maya account of the origin of maize from the heart of the Maize Mother. An African one is the Nzima (Ghana) myth of the origin of that same plant. In the Nzima myth, two female figures appear: a mother, the ancestress responsible for the introduction of maize cultivation, and her daughter, sacrificed by the mother. An ancient Greek myth of cerealiculture also features a mother and her daughter. The goddess Demeter, angry because her young daughter Persephone has been abducted by the netherworld god, causes the vegetation (specifically, cereals) to wither and abandons the gods to travel among men. She is taken for an old woman and employed by a king and his wife as a nurse for their baby. Although she is spied upon and interrupted while trying to make the baby immortal by burning it, and then leaves the king's palace forever, condemning the baby to mortality, she teaches the king the Eleusinian mysteries. Finally, Persephone returns to the upper world, where she will periodically reside, and the vegetation is revived. In other versions, Demeter teaches the techniques of agriculture to a king who had helped her. This myth, in whatever version, sanctions mortality, agriculture, and the most famous of Greek mystery rites as fundamental and related aspects of human existence known since primeval times and presents a motherly figure as responsible for the origin of cultivation.

The correspondence between the female protagonists of myths of this kind and the second type of extrahuman entities described in the previous section is often explicit. However, as in the myth of the Cochiti Pueblo of New Mexico, the correspondence may be indirect. The Mother of the Indians, we are told, abandoned her children; when they sent messengers to her underground dwelling to ask for her help in a moment of crisis, she gave them the first maize "fetish" or doll, made of a maize plant adorned with feathers and buckskin strings, a prototype of the object used by the Cochiti in agrarian rituals. Clearly, the maize figure is a substitute for the Mother, and, as in the case of Demeter in the first version of her myth, it is ritual material connected with cultivation rather than cultivation itself that is given to humans by the disappearing female.

As for the theme (subtype 3) of the offended superhu-

man female, it is present in many myths of the "excretion" type. In a series of myths told by the Creek, Cherokee, and Natchez maize growers of the southeastern United States, the mythic woman, who sometimes appears in the shape of a maize plant or cob, gives maize (and sometimes beans) to humans. She takes care of orphans and other needy people, and for them she produces maize grains by rubbing her own body. The woman is murdered in some versions, and in others she offers herself in sacrifice; but in all versions of the myth, before dying, she instructs the people about the actions they must perform in order to let maize and beans spring forth from her body. Myths of this type are widespread. Two more examples will serve to indicate that the themes these myths have in common are not restricted to the "excretion" motif but include the motif typical of the third "subtype" of the classification given above.

In a myth of the Toraja of Sulawesi (Indonesia), a fisherman often left his wife to go on fishing expeditions; when he came back, he always found a large pot full of rice, but his wife would not tell him from whence it had come. One day, he spied on her through a fissure in the wall of their dwelling and saw that she rubbed her hands together over the pot and thus filled it with rice. Disgusted by this discovery, he reproached her for this unclean procedure; as a result of his reproaches the woman transformed herself into a rice plant, and he became a sago palm. The yam and taro growers of Melanesia and New Guinea have similar myths (in New Guinea, the myths are about Yam Woman, who miraculously produces yams from her own body), but a complex myth, very similar to the American and Indonesian myths, is to be found among the Maori of New Zealand and accounts for the origin of the *kumara* (sweet potato). The goddess Pani took care of two young orphaned nephews and nourished them with baked *kumara;* the two brothers, who loved this previously unknown food, kept asking where it came from, but Pani would not tell them. One day, one of the brothers spied on her and discovered that she drew the sweet potatoes from her own body while lying in the water. In another version, she obtained the *kumara* by rubbing her hands on her belly. The boy told his brother: "We are eating Pani's excretions." Ashamed, Pani retired to the netherworld, where one of the nephews magically reached her and found her cultivating *kumara.*

In America, Indonesia, and New Zealand a female figure is thus believed to have obtained the main cultivated plant from her own body and to have given it generously to the needy; it is further recounted that she was spied on while doing this, and that, ashamed or offended, she disappeared, having given rise to the culti-

vated plants and to the techiques of agriculture. The similarity between these myths and the ancient Greek myth about Demeter is striking, and points to connections between the origin myths of cerealiculturalists and those of other cultivators. The complexity of historical derivations and typological connections between the various origin myths can be illustrated by one last, paradoxical example. In mythical times, according to traditional Maya beliefs, the rain god hit with his lightning the rock in which the maize god was hidden, and the maize god was born, the answer to the prayers of primeval, needy mankind. The later, christianized culture of Guatemala and Yucatán, however, reinterpreted the ancient Maya maize god as a Christ-like, bread-of-life figure, thus introducing elements of the Hainuwele type into a traditional myth more similar to the Prometheus type.

As shown by many of these examples, the myths about the origin of cultivation point to crisis as well as to fertility. Many such myths present the cultivation of plants as an ambiguous, dangerous innovation, caused by a primeval mistake or sin. The attitude they reflect is similar to that expressed by the ritual "return of the dead" during crucial moments of the seasonal cycle. The costs and risks of cultivation are expressed mythically and ritually by societies whose well-being, contingent upon the outcome of cultivation, is perennially at stake, and must be continually reaffirmed both by technical and by ritual and ideological means. By relegating the nonagrarian life to a distant past, and by showing the positive consequences of the "sacrilegious" invading of uncontrolled nature by human endeavor, the founding myths of cultivators reinforce the cultural and economic systems that express them and protect the social body against a recurrent series of cyclical crises. [See also Culture Heroes.]

Religious and Social Values of Cultivators. In many origin myths the female responsible for the beginning of cultivation acted in favor of helpless or derelict children who did not belong to a system of family solidarity (e.g., orphans), or she is presented as a generous nourisher. This mythic trait corresponds well to the importance of hospitality among cultivators and to the periodic redistribution of the produce of cultivation on festive occasions that reach their peak in the alimentary orgy and in the offerings of first fruits to the returning dead on ritual occasions. The foundation of all these conceptions, beliefs, and behaviors is the economic life that cultivation makes possible, a stable way of life in which the relative abundance of food makes further economic and cultural changes possible, makes the redistribution of the yearly produce among the members of the community a vital task, and provides a surplus for

ritual and even orgiastic consumption on given seasonal occasions.

A relatively egalitarian ideology of collective labor, festive consumption, generalized redistribution, and hospitable generosity is typical of the less complex societies of cultivators. It is replaced by an ideology of vertical concentration and redistribution in societies in which production, distribution, and consumption of agrarian produce become more complex, tasks and roles become more differentiated, and a privileged status is assumed by a group or a person, chief, or king. The cooperation and solidarity necessary to obtain and share a good harvest are identified with the ability of the rulers to organize, to judge, and to distribute the yearly produce. Harvest festivals, as happen in Africa in the Swazi kingdom, may become the occasion for ritual dramas of rebellion and reproach, enhancing and upholding the "rights" of the subjects and stressing the "duties" of the rulers. On the other hand, in societies such as these the sanctity of the (private) property of the land, and of its symbol, the boundary stone, is upheld by religious beliefs and sactions; the other face of kingly generosity, the periodic tribute of a part of the agrarian produce to the rulers, is also upheld by sacred sanctions.

Just as the importance of social solidarity for the very survival of agrarian communities is stressed by beliefs and rites based upon redistribution and consumption, other aspects of the ethos of cultivators are expressed by other religious complexes. Despite the importance of sexual license and festive license of various types in the religiosity of cultivators, the belief that the respect of social and religious rules and prohibitions, of ritual purity, and of sexual purity in particular is essential for the good functioning of cultivation is a worldwide feature. The ritual purity of the peasants of modern northern Europe is obtained by a bath and the donning of new or clean clothes before the main agricultural labors, such as plowing or sowing or reaping. The importance of virgins, old men and women, and even eunuchs in rituals and cults either directly agrarian (such as the ancient Egyptian rites performed by castrated men to ensure the yearly Nile inundation and the fertility of the fields) or linked to mother goddesses is an extreme aspect of this symbolic complex. In many hierarchical societies, the chief or king must live in a perpetual state of ritual purity. This purity is believed to have a direct influence upon the agrarian produce and is upheld by a complex series of norms and taboos.

The correct distribution of the yearly produce of cultivation and the correct functioning of ritual and social norms are thus no less important in the religious life of cultivators than sexual symbolism or the belief that ex-

trahuman entities control or embody the growth of cultivated plants. Of equal importance is the religious aura surrounding the specific technical aspects of agrarian production; the sanctity of animals such as the plow ox in ancient Greece or of objects such as the plow among early modern Italian peasants and the agriculturists of Madagascar today are good examples. What is most meaningful, however, is the widespread sacrality of the general complex of technical knowledge and ritual lore necessary to cultivation.

Technical knowledge and ritual lore are often believed to have been learned from extrahuman beings in mythic times. Moreover, the acquiring of that knowledge is often connected with a primeval mistake or sin and is tied to the origins of the main cultural traits of the society that are expressed in myth, as well as to the beginnings of human mortality. The fact that the Eleusinian mysteries are mythically founded by a narrative tradition that also recounts the divine origin of agriculture may point to an intrinsic connection between the technical-ritual knowledge necessary for cultivation and the ritual and symbolic knowledge about the religious value of human life that was the object of what we call "mystery" cults. This point aside, the agrarian connections of the ancient mystery cults are beyond doubt, as are the connections between the eschatological and soteriological expectations the mystery cults express and the agriculturist's awareness of the perennial repetition of the agrarian cycle of the "death" and "rebirth" of plants.

[*See also* Vegetation *and* Neolithic Religion.]

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CRISTIANO GROTTANELLI

AGUDAT YISRA'EL is the world movement of Orthodox Jewry, founded in 1912. The name Agudat Yisra'el, or Agudath Israel (Union of Israel), commonly abbreviated as "Agudah," is derived from a passage in Jewish High Holy Day liturgy that speaks of all crea-

tures forming "one union" to do God's will. Established in order to preserve the traditional Jewish way of life and to counter the influence of competing secular or religious ideologies, Agudat Yisra'el nevertheless adopted a series of ideological and organizational innovations. The very act of organizing an Orthodox political party was in itself a concession to the sociopolitical exigencies of the time, which more extreme Orthodox elements opposed on principle.

History. The initiative for the formation of Agudat Yisra'el came from the separatist Orthodox communities of Germany united in the Freie Vereinigung für die Interessen des Orthodoxen Judentums. They envisioned a worldwide union of Orthodox Jewry that would enlist the great rabbinical figures of eastern Europe and the Orthodox masses there in the fight against Zionism and Reform Judaism. At about the same time (early twentieth century), some eastern European rabbis made abortive attempts at providing an Orthodox alternative to the Zionist and Jewish socialist parties. Orthodox rabbi and historian Yitshaq Eizik ha-Levi brought together representatives of the Freie Vereinigung and the eastern European rabbinate at Bad Homburg (1909), a meeting that laid the groundwork for what became Agudat Yisra'el. The decision of the Tenth Zionist Congress (1911) to embark on a full-fledged educational and cultural program in the Diaspora gave further impetus for an Orthodox countereffort. Elements of the religious Zionist Mizraḥi movement that broke with the Zionist Organization over this decision joined the groups founding Agudat Yisra'el.

The founding conference of the world Agudat Yisra'el was held in Kattowitz, Upper Silesia (now Katowice, Poland) in May 1912, with some three hundred delegates in attendance. This conference began the delicate task of uniting under one organizational roof representatives of Orthodox communities from Germany, from Russia, Poland, and Lithuania, and from Hungary. Though these communities shared opposition to Zionism and other secular ideologies, they divided over many religious issues of both style and substance. Beginning at Kattowitz, the compromise view that prevailed granted autonomy within the framework of Agudah to each brand of Orthodoxy to follow its path on the local and regional level with no coercion on the part of other brands to accept their views. Thus the Frankfurt Orthodox allowed wide secular education, adopted German speech and dress, but demanded a separatist Orthodox community; their Polish counterparts clung to Yiddish, preferred traditional Jewish dress and education, and refused to secede from *qehillah* (Jewish community) boards, where they often constituted the largest group.

The Kattowitz Conference set up a temporary council, whose task would be to stimulate Orthodox organization in Germany and other countries, and nominated the first Mo'etset Gedolai ha-Torah (Council of Torah Sages), the rabbinical body designed to review and supervise all major decisions of the movement. Preparations began for convening in August 1914 the supreme body of the world Agudah, to be known as the Kenesiyyah Gedolah (Great Assembly, a name derived from a phrase in *Avot* 4.11, "an assembly for the sake of heaven"), an Orthodox equivalent of and answer to the Zionist congresses. The first meeting of the Great Assembly, postponed because of the outbreak of war, did not take place until 1923.

The German occupation of Poland opened up new opportunities for the organization of Orthodox Jewry in the east. Attached as advisers to the occupation authorities, representatives of the Freie Vereinigung won the trust of the Polish rabbis and Hasidic leaders and launched the substantive organization of Agudah in Poland, which would become the largest and most politically active branch of the movement. Drawing its strength mainly from the followers of the Hasidic *rebe* of Gur (Góra), the Polish Agudah elected deputies to the Polish parliament and numerous city councils, and it won control of many Jewish *qehillot* (community councils), including those of the two largest communities, Warsaw and Lódź.

The interwar period, punctuated by the three Great Assemblies of 1923, 1929, and 1937, witnessed the consolidation and expansion of Agudah's work on the national and international levels. The world movement established both a Qeren ha-Torah (Torah Fund) to support Orthodox educational institutions and a Qeren ha-Yishuv (Settlement Fund) to support Orthodox efforts in Palestine, which received no aid from the Zionist organizations. Through the work of Qeren ha-Torah, local communities rebuilt schools destroyed during the war and set up new schools. Agudah politicians intervened with government officials in various countries to remove bureaucratic obstacles to the maintenance of traditional education. In Poland they gained government recognition of Agudah schools, although this involved the addition of some secular subjects to the curriculum of the *ḥeder* (lit., "room"), the traditional Jewish religious school. Even more innovative was Agudah's adoption and promotion of the Beit Ya'akov schools for girls. In the eyes of Agudah leaders, the threats facing Orthodoxy justified such a step. An entire network of (generally supplementary) primary and secondary girls' schools developed, with teachers supplied by a central teachers' seminary in Cracow. The Beit Ya'akov system soon spread to other countries. [*For fur-*

ther discussion of Beit Ya'akov, see the biography of Sarah Schenirer.]

On the international level, Agudat Yisra'el endeavored to provide an independent Orthodox viewpoint on all major Jewish issues. It most vehemently reacted to matters of special concern to Orthodox Jewry, such as proposed calendar reform or attacks on Jewish ritual slaughter. It consistently denied the right of secular Jewish organizations to speak in the name of all Jewry.

Though debate flared up on occasion within Agudah ranks over the centrality of Palestine in the Agudah agenda and worldview, Agudah developed an active presence in the Land of Israel. In the 1920s and early 1930s, it strove for recognition of the separate status of the old ultra-Orthodox community and resisted inclusion in the general representative bodies of the organized Jewish community. By the mid-thirties, however, waves of Orthodox immigrants from Germany and Poland altered the balance of power in the Agudah in Palestine in favor of more participation in and cooperation with the general community. Those who supported the old separatist line in Palestine eventually broke with Agudat Yisra'el.

The destruction of most of European Jewry in the Holocaust wiped out the major centers of Agudat Yisra'el as well, and Israel and the United States became the primary locations of party activity from then on. During the war years, Agudah activists inside and outside Nazi-occupied Europe endeavored to rescue rabbis and others. On occasion, Agudah dissented from general Jewish policies by its attempts at direct financial aid to Jews in the European ghettos, despite criticism that such help aided the enemy by breaking the economic boycott of Nazi-held Europe.

In the postwar period, Agudah took immediate steps to resume the full range of activities among the survivors in the European displaced-persons camps. The fourth Great Assembly in 1947 showed the great losses Agudah had suffered, but it also demonstrated the party's determination to remain a force in the Jewish world.

Israel became the major arena for Agudah activities. In the 1940s, as a Jewish state came closer to reality, Agudah made peace with the idea of a Zionist-dominated state, and it, too, issued a call for Jewish independence. Agudah thinkers even drafted a constitution for a state based on Torah. For the first time, Agudah joined the religious Zionist Mizraḥi party in a United Religious Front to press the claim for maintenance of minimal religious standards in public life, including observance of the Sabbath and dietary laws in public institutions, rabbinical control of marriage and divorce,

and government support for religious education. As a member of the governing coalition, Agudah received special support for its school system, as well as exemption from military service for religious girls and *yeshivah* students. In the early 1950s, Agudah left the coalition over the issue of compulsory alternative national service for women. As an opposition force, it railed against what it considered breaches of Jewish tradition, such as overly liberal autopsy and abortion laws or the raising of pigs on Jewish farms. Electorally, Agudat Yisra'el has consistently won the votes of approximately 3 percent of the Israeli electorate (4 seats in the 120-seat Knesset). In the 1984 elections, however, defections of Sefardic and some non-Hasidic Ashkenazic elements to the new Shas party halved Agudah's Knesset representation.

Both in Israel and the United States, Agudat Yisra'el has made a generally successful adjustment to its new status of representing a small minority within Jewry. In Israel, it has become a regular, accepted part of the political scene. In 1977, after a quarter century in the opposition, it joined the center-right Likud coalition, but without representation in the cabinet. In 1984, the reduced Agudah delegation participated in the national unity coalition that forms the government, this time demanding and receiving a subcabinet appointment. In the United States, Agudah began functioning effectively only during World War II. It built its strength on the transplanted remnants of Frankfurt Orthodoxy and Holocaust survivors from eastern Europe, but eventually it built a local constituency from the graduates of Agudah-affiliated educational institutions and members of Agudah-affiliated synagogues. Agudah has become the principal voice of independent Orthodoxy, being free of the "taint" of cooperation with the non-Orthodox movements in rabbinical or congregational umbrella organizations. Agudah activists have adapted to American political conditions as an effective lobbying group, with influence on the state and federal levels and a growing presence in some local Jewish federations.

Organization and Branches. In theory, the supreme body of Agudah is the Council of Torah Sages, the institutional fulfillment of Agudah's slogan, "To solve all the problems of the day according to Torah and tradition." In reality, the council has met only infrequently as a formal body, and any ongoing rabbinical supervision of party affairs has come by way of informal consultations with key rabbis. In the past two decades, however, the functioning of the rabbinical council both in Israel and the United States has become more regularized and more closely approximates its original intended function. The Israeli council has, however, been paralyzed for considerable periods by differences of opinion

within its ranks, which resulted in the council not being convened.

In addition to the Council of Torah Sages, the supreme deliberative body of Agudat Yisra'el is the Great Assembly, which is convened every five years. In between Great Assemblies, a central council of one hundred elected delegates from the assembly meets annually to assess party affairs. Management of day-to-day matters rests with a small executive committee. Organization of Agudah on the national and regional level in the United States, Israel, and Europe follows the same general pattern.

Within the Agudat Yisra'el movement there also developed a number of subsidiary and auxiliary organizations. These included organizations for youth (Tse'irei Agudah, founded 1919), for girls (Benot Agudah, founded 1925/6), for women (Neshei Agudah, founded 1929), and for Orthodox workers (Po'alei Agudah, founded 1923). Of these organizations Po'alei Agudah showed the most independence in attempting to represent the interests of its declared constituency. It proved to be an almost constant source of friction within the Agudah camp, and in Israel Po'alei Agudah eventually split with the parent body and ran independent lists of candidates. Agudah also had its own press and school systems.

Ideology. With a few notable exceptions, such as Isaac Breuer (of Germany, later Palestine), the rabbis and publicists associated with Agudat Yisra'el offered no systematic presentations of party doctrine. Nevertheless, an examination of newspaper articles, propaganda pamphlets, party proclamations, and rabbinic writings reveals some common themes that run through Agudah thought from its beginnings to the present.

A major ideological innovation of Agudat Yisra'el was the doctrine of da'at Torah ("Torah view"). According to this doctrine, the authority of the scholars who stood at the head of the movement extended to matters of economics and politics and was not limited to strictly religious matters. In a paradoxical twist, those men totally immersed in the study of Torah and furthest removed from everyday events are proclaimed to be best able to decide matters of political and social policy. Thus Agudat Yisra'el as a party benefited from the unerring judgment and the aura of holiness of the Torah scholars who, theoretically at least, supervised all party activities. Da'at Torah is an essentially defensive doctrine, the response of an embattled traditional leadership elite to the rise of alternative leaders and doctrines.

From the beginning, Agudah rejected the ideology of secular Zionism. At the same time, though, it consistently stressed its support for increased Jewish settlement in Palestine. The point of contention was the character of the Jewish center being built there. Agudah wished to strengthen the old centers of learning and to ensure that the new settlement be based on traditional Jewish values and laws. Agudah saw solely territorial rebirth of the Jewish people as insufficient. Even in the Land of Israel, Jews could not survive without the Torah. Since the Torah stood at the center of Agudah's concerns, it could never accept the official position of the Zionist movement that religion was a private matter.

In the long run, a detailed party program and ideology have not been crucial for Agudat Yisra'el. It has turned to its constituency not on the basis of any specific program but on the basis of the collective charisma of the Torah sages and a general desire to defend traditional Judaism at all costs.

[*See also* Orthodox Judaism.]

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AHIṂSĀ. The Sanskrit term *ahiṃsā*, often translated as "nonviolence," has been taken into Western languages as a result of the influence of Mohandas Gandhi. Gandhi explicitly associated *ahiṃsā* with chastity and the absence of possessions as well as with the conviction that one should identify with all beings; he considered *ahiṃsā* to be based on self-control, necessitating preliminary (self-)purification. He also stressed that *ahiṃsā* is a condition of truth, which in turn can be equated with God. Hence Gandhi's invitation, in the last sentence of his autobiography: "In bidding farewell to the reader . . . I ask him to join me in praying to the God of Truth that He may grant me the boon of *ahiṃsā* in mind, word and deed" (Gandhi, 1929).

Considering the traditional Hindu equation of reality with truth (*satya*), it is not surprising that Gandhi used *ahiṃsā* not only as a moral weapon but as a political one as well; in so doing he refused to separate politics

and religion. He thus resorted to, and, to a certain extent, reinterpreted an ancient Indian concept.

Similar ideas were current nearly two thousand years ago in some of the oldest Upaniṣads, developing among Brahmanic saṃnyāsins (ascetics, mendicants) as well as among the heterodox Buddhist and Jain communities. Such views, it has been convincingly argued, were the outcome of a kind of ideological revolution that took place in India around 500 BCE. At that time, the more contemplative values of the "metaritualist" philosophers superseded earlier magico-ritualistic concepts of religion. [See also Saṃnyāsa.]

It can be deduced from the more ancient texts that the Vedic Indians believed in an inverted "world beyond," where one must suffer the very fate previously inflicted by him on other beings. Whereas, in order to escape the consequences of one's (cruel) deeds the Vedic brahmans succeeded in inventing elaborate rituals, they still deemed it important, in order to avoid retaliation, to abstain from injuring other beings—thus, to practice ahiṃsā.

With the development of the doctrine of transmigration and retribution of actions (karman), liberation from rebirth became the ultimate goal of the religious life, and the renouncer's way of life became the ideal behavior. Magico-ritualistic attitudes subsided in favor of ethical and mystical values: thus the Upaniṣadic sages point to the identity of ātman and brahman and praise the man who "sees the Self in (his) self, sees the Self in everything. . . ." In this way, the traditional, magical fear of retaliation was replaced by a sense of fellow feeling towards all that lives; ahiṃsā, endowed with an indubitably positive value, was expanded into such concepts as "compassion" (dayā), a virtue that is required particularly of those who strive after liberation, regardless of the community to which they belong.

The first major vow taken by Brahmanic ascetics and by Buddhist and Jain religious mendicants alike is that life should not be destroyed, whether in mind, in words, or in deeds. The Jains especially emphasize the unique importance of this pledge (which their lay believers also take), and emphasize that all forms of violence, including the passions, destroy the soul's ability to attain ultimate perfection; in addition, that violence turns against the very man who does not refrain from it.

The observance of ahiṃsā naturally implies many restrictions as far as the mendicant's diet is concerned. The only acceptable food is that which can be prepared without taking another life; meat-eating is thus shunned. In a more extreme view, plants that are cultivated and then cut and destroyed to become food are also forbidden. The ideal diet, then, consists of fruits, which fall naturally from the trees. Because various penances and ascetic practices have always been based on fasting or on living only on fruits or seeds, ahiṃsā came to be closely associated with vegetarianism, of which the Jains soon became and remain uncompromising advocates.

The concept of noninjury, coupled with self-control or self-restraint, was rich in many potential developments. It soon became the central ethical idea in most of the philosophies and religions of India. Indeed, in some communities ahiṃsā was given paramount importance, and in this respect Gandhi does not deny the great influence that the revered Jain layman Raychandbhai Mehta exerted on him. The emphasis that Gandhi laid on ahiṃsā, however, would have remained of no avail had it not been firmly rooted in an immemorial Indian tradition.

[See also Nonviolence and the biography of Gandhi.]

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COLETTE CAILLAT

AHMADĪYAH. The Ahmadīyah represent a particularistic form of Islam derived from the leadership and teachings of Mīrzā Ghulām Ahmad (1835–1908) of the village of Qādiān in the Punjab state of India. They number approximately ten million worldwide, of which a core community of four million is in Pakistan, the national headquarters of the movement in the late twentieth century.

Most important among the beliefs that give the Ahmadis (also called Qadianis and, less acceptably, Mirzais) their distinctive character is the belief that Ghulām Ahmad was a prophet (nabī), the awaited reformer (mujaddid) of the fourteenth Islamic century, the Mahdi and promised Messiah (masīh maw'ūd), and the expected tenth incarnation of the Hindu god Viṣṇu. Thus, the founder represented for his followers the fulfillment

of the millenarian expectations of Muslims, Christians, and Hindus. In addition, the Ahmadis hold a controversial view about a postcrucifixion life of Jesus: that through divine intervention he escaped from the cross but instead of ascending into heaven undertook a mission to the Lost Tribes of Israel in Afghanistan and Kashmir, in which latter place he died and was buried in a tomb still extant in Srinagar. Since, therefore, Jesus was mortal like God's other prophets, the messiahship of Ghulām Aḥmad was that of a person possessing the "spirit and power" of Jesus, not as Jesus personally returned.

These beliefs are major variants of the accepted Muslim positions on both Muḥammad as the final historical prophet and Jesus as having miraculously remained alive in heaven after his rescue from the cross. Nevertheless, Ahmadis aver that these and other doctrines, such as their concept of peaceful *jihād*, do not depart in any way from or add anything to Islam. They hold that their beliefs set forth only what has been inherent in Islam from the beginning. The bitter conflict within Indo-Pakistani Islam to which these assertions have given rise will be discussed below.

History. Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad emerged as a noteworthy commentator on the Qur'ān and champion of Islam with the publication in the early 1880s of his four-volume work *Barāhīn-i Aḥmadīyah* (Proofs of Aḥmadīyah). The Punjab at this time was experiencing a resurgence of religious nationalism as a result of the westernizing and christianizing pressures of the British administration. A number of reform movements appeared within the Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim communities, directed at the defense of their own religious values and the elimination of what the reformers considered to be nonessential cultural accretions. In the last two decades of the century the province was an arena of intense communal rivalry. From the relative obscurity of his family's feudal estate at Qādiān in Gurdaspur district, Ghulām Aḥmad entered the conflict, not only with his scholarly commentary but also with a series of prophetic and charismatic claims which made him personally a center of controversy. His numerous books and publications, including *Fatḥ-i Islām* (The Victory of Islam) and *Izālah-i awham* (Removal of False Opinions), which explain these claims, and his acceptance of *bay'at* (a vow of spiritual homage) from his followers in 1889, led to Sunnī denunciation of the new leader and his doctrines as heretical. Thus began, with the first anti-Aḥmadīyah *fatwā* of 1891, the long effort to excommunicate the Ahmadis from Islam, an effort that culminated in the April 1984 martial law regulation to this effect. Issued by the government of Pakistan, the regulation declared the Ahmadis to be a non-Muslim minority and

prohibited them from calling themselves Muslims or using any Qur'anic or Islamic terminology in their worship or preaching.

Missionary Activity. The organizational and missionary achievements of the movement are remarkable. The latter represents the most successful Islamic proselytizing effort of the twentieth century and led to the establishment of branches in Europe, North America, the Caribbean, Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Basin. The vigor of its missionary enterprise arose from the audacious universalism and self-confidence of Ghulām Aḥmad, which imparted a global dimension to his spiritual vision, and the abilities of his early followers, such as Muhammad Ali, Kamal-ud-Din, and Sufi Bengalee, who engaged in literary and organizational work and were responsible for planting the first outposts in England and the United States. From the outset propagation of Islam in its Aḥmadīyah form was considered the main responsibility of the movement. The methods used were adopted from the current practices in vogue in the Punjab during Ghulām Aḥmad's lifetime: street preaching, public meetings, the use of books, periodicals, and other religious publications, formal challenges and debates, the study and refutation of other religions and their spokesmen and, most important, the translation and dissemination of the Qur'ān with commentary in the major modern languages.

Personal Leadership. Behind this missionary enterprise was the organized energy of a community that looked to the personal leadership of its head, Ghulām Aḥmad, and after 1908 the line of his successors, designated Khalīfat al-Masīḥ, of whom there have been four: (1) Hakim Nur-ud-Din (1908–1914), (2) Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad (1914–1965), (3) Mirza Nasir Ahmad (1965–1982), and (4) Mirza Tahir Ahmad (1982–). Although there is no formal dynastic principle involved in the selection of the head, three of the four are, in fact, descendants of the founder: namely, his son, Bashir-ud-Din, and Nasir Ahmad and Tahir Ahmad, sons of Bashir-ud-Din. The succession is by election in an electoral college of three hundred members who are charged with the responsibility of electing the most qualified person regardless of family connection.

A disagreement over the issue of personal leadership after the death of Hakim Nur-ud-Din produced a schism led by Muhammad Ali, editor of *The Review of Religions* and translator of the Qur'ān into English, and Kamal-ud-Din, author, lecturer, and missionary at the Woking Mosque in England. The Lahoris, as the secessionists were called, believed that Ghulām Aḥmad intended to pass authority on to the Central Aḥmadīyah Association (Ṣadr Anjuman-i Aḥmadīyah), and thus provide the movement with a collective leadership. Theological dif-

ferences also marked the secessionists, who moved their headquarters to Lahore. These included positions more in line with orthodox Islam with respect to the belief that Ghulām Aḥmad was a reformer, not a prophet, thus removing the main Sunnī complaint against them. In a more general way the schism can be understood as a conflict between the traditional belief in charismatic spiritual preceptorship, which was characteristic of Indian religion, and the modernizing democratic trend visible in the nineteenth-century reform movements.

However, the organizational structure over which the *khalīfah* presides is clearly modernist, as are its educational, publication, and missionary activities. The structure evolved during the tenures of Ghulām Aḥmad, Bashir-ud-Din, and Nasir Ahmad and now embraces the following elements:

1. *The Central Aḥmadīyah Association*, under the direction of a chief secretary, who is responsible for supervising subordinate departments including Treasury, Discipline and General Affairs, Relations with Other Communities and Government, Education and Training, Missionary Work and Propagation, Compilations and Publications, and Hospitality;
2. *The Advisory Council of the Khalīfah*, formed in 1922 and made up of as many as six hundred nominated and elected senior members;
3. *The Branch Associations*, both in Pakistan and foreign countries, where the majority of the Ahmadis are to be found today;
4. *The Islamic Judicial System (Qaẓā')*, created in 1925 to handle discipline and civil cases involving disputes among the Ahmadis;
5. *The Women's Association*;
6. *Boys' and Men's Associations*, which provide for males from age eight on;
7. *Secular and religious schools and training institutions*, with the Tā'līm-ul-Islām College at its apex;
8. *The New Movement* (Tahrīk-i-Jadīd), formed in 1934 to improve training, discipline, and missionary work;
9. *Majlis Nusrat Jahān*, a board to supervise and expand Ahmadi schools and hospitals in West Africa.

Linking all of these elements together in an experience of common membership is the annual meeting *(jalsah)*, held at the end of December at Rabwah, Pakistan, attended by thousands of Ahmadis from Pakistan and abroad and presided over by the *khalīfah*.

The future of the *jalsah*, as well as other activities of the community, is currently uncertain, following the April 1984 action of the Pakistan government prohibiting the public use of its Islamic identity. Anti-Aḥmadīyah agitation flared up repeatedly during the British pe-

riod. In 1947 the community was forced to abandon Qādiān and migrate to Pakistan. Like an Ahmadi Brigham Young, Mirza Bashir-ud-Din established his people at Rabwah, a desolate region of the western Punjab, where the wilderness was brought to life. Twice since, in 1953 and again in the 1970s, anti-Aḥmadīyah agitations generated riots and loss of life, but the action of 1984, if permanent, raises new problems of the most fundamental kind for Ahmadi Islam.

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AHMAD KHAN, SAYYID (1817–1898), also known on the Indian subcontinent as Sir Sayyid; educational reformer and religious thinker. He was born in Delhi on 17 October 1817 and died at Aligarh on 27 March 1898. Raised in the house of his maternal grandfather, the Mughal noble Khwājah Farīd al-Dīn Khan (1747–1828), he received the traditional education of a Delhi gentleman, reading the Qur'ān in Arabic and Sa'dī's *Gulistān* and *Būstān* and the *dīvān* of Ḥāfiẓ of Shiraz in Persian, together with a smattering of works on mathematics, astronomy, and Greco-Arab medicine.

At the age of nineteen Ahmad Khan entered the judicial service of the East India Company, where he was to rise, in the course of his thirty-eight years of service, to the highest ranks then open to native Indians. From the 1840s onward he published a number of short scientific and religious works, but it was his historical scholarship, and especially his Urdu-language topographical work on Delhi, *Āthār al-ṣanādīd* (1846; rev. ed., 1852), that made him known internationally.

He always considered the British the legitimate rulers of India, but a major turning point in his life came with the failure of the Indian Revolution, known as the Mutiny of 1857. Only then did he become fully convinced that the best of Western civilization could and should be assimilated by the Muslims, because Islam, properly understood, the "pure" Islam taught by the Qur'ān and lived by the Prophet, was not simply unopposed to Western civilization but was in fact its ultimate source and inspiration. In the early 1860s, Ahmad Khan founded the Scientific Society, an association for the translation into Urdu and propagation of works of Western science and scholarship; after his visit to England in 1869–1870, these efforts led to the establishment of the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, the beginning of the first secular university for Indian Muslims.

Against considerable opposition from the 'ulamā', as well as from members of his own class, Sir Sayyid emerged in the mid-1880s as the leader of an important sector of Indian Muslims, the majority of whom in 1887 followed his advice not to join the predominantly Hindu, middle-class Indian National Congress. Parliamentary democracy demanded active participation in the process of governmental decision making, and for lack of effective political organization among Muslims he feared that such a congress would bring about the permanent subordination of Muslims to Hindus.

Besides countless editorials and aricles for the *Aligarh Institute Gazette* and for *Tahdhīb al-akhlāq* (The Muslim Reformer), two periodicals he founded, Ahmad Khan wrote a number of important religious monographs, including *Tabyīn al-kalām* (a fragmentary commentary on the Bible in three volumes, 1862–1865), *Essays on the Life of Mohammed* (1870), and a seven-volume Urdu translation and commentary on the Qur'ān up to surah 20 (1880–1904). Most of his articles and tracts, including important parts of his Qur'ān commentary, have been reedited in sixteen volumes by M. Ismā'īl Pānīpatī in *Maqālāt-i Sar Sayyid* (Lahore, 1962–1965).

In his earliest religious writings Sayyid Ahmad Khan strives to put the person and actions of the Prophet back into the center of Muslim life, and he forcefully denounces innovation. Highly conscious of the hiatus between original Muslim practice and the contemporary reality of Indian Muslim society, he stresses the ideals that should inform a corporate Muslim life and insists on the need for an interiorized ethics of the heart. These emphases point to three major influences upon his early outlook: the Naqshbandī Mujaddidī Ṣūfī order, to which Sayyid Ahmad Khan was linked intimately by his family; the theologian, mystic, and social thinker Shāh Walī Allāh (1703–1762) and his house; and the Mujāhidīn movement led by Sayyid Aḥmad of Rai Bareilly (1796–1836) and Shāh Ismā'īl (1773–1831), without the political overtones of the latter's teachings and activities, however.

The political consequences of the British crushing of the 1857 "Mutiny" led Ahmad Khan to exclude from the purview of the injunctions of the holy law the whole area of culture and society on the grounds that they were "this-worldly" and not strictly religious (dīnī) in character. His teaching remained opaque, however, as to which basic principles of the law—as distinguished from its elaborate prescriptions—could and should inform Muslim sociocultural life with its distinctive Islamic quality.

Sayyid Ahmad Khan not only gave single theological answers to single challenges; by going back to the sources and principles of the various Islamic religious sciences, he attempted a consistent, comprehensively valid theological response. He tried to evolve a new Muslim theology on the pattern, as he saw it, of the Muslim response to Greek philosophy and science during the Abbasid renaissance. The Christian missionary attack under the British imperial aegis, in his view, could be met by accepting and interpreting the present-day scriptures of Jews and Christians as the revealed word of God. Freed from the distortions of an erroneous dogmatic interpretation, and in the light of the uniquely clear Qur'anic message of God's unity, the gospel of Jesus continues to be relevant.

Critical studies of Muḥammad's biography and of earliest Islam by William Muir (1819–1905) and other scholars provided Ahmad Khan with the battleground for evolving, in defensive response, ever more severe canons of external and internal ḥadīth criticism. Taking into account the long period of oral transmission preceding the codification of the ḥadīth, along with the laws of the rise and growth of legends, Sir Sayyid accepts the results of post-Newtonian natural science as established truth and uses them to justify the need for metaphorical interpretation (ta'wīl) of biblical and Qur'anic texts. Contemporary and later theological critics have not failed to censure Ahmad Khan for what they consider to be philological ignorance and willfulness in scriptural interpretation.

Besides the "new sciences," the plurality of religions (each claiming the exclusive possession of final, saving truth) led Sir Sayyid to postulate reason ('aql) as the ultimate criterion of the truth. And reason, for Sir Sayyid, is nothing but the "law of nature," actually, or at least potentially, accessible in full to the human rational faculty. Any happening against the "law of nature" would mean a breach of God's promise and is thus inconceivable. Such a conviction about an all-in-

clusive, fully determined, and closed nexus of natural law(s) implies the negation of miracles and supernatural events as well as the rejection of traditional views regarding the efficacy of prayers of petition.

In the theologically crucial area of theological epistemology Sayyid Ahmad Khan renews the teaching of classical Muslim philosophers *(falāsifah)*. The gift of prophethood, as a natural trait *(malakah)* given to a person at conception, becomes part of the predetermined system of creation and is independent of divine choice. The credibility of the Qur'ān (as of any revealed scripture) is based not on miracles but on the intrinsic value of its content, in the same way that the unsurpassed and unsurpassable greatness of Muḥammad is due to the essential nature of his teaching and to his unparalleled moral effort to spread it.

However incomplete and superficial Sayyid Ahmad Khan's acquaintance with the new sciences and with Western philosophy and historical criticism may have been, and however rash he was in accepting what he thought to be their presuppositions and lasting results, it goes to his credit that before any other Muslim he saw the necessity of a radical reappraisal of Islamic religious thought with openness to modern science, scholarship, and philosophy.

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and the contemporary challenges of Christian preaching, historical criticism, and the "new sciences." It presents the overall structure of his new Muslim theology and, in part 2, offers a substantial choice of texts relating to Sayyid Ahmad Khan's credo, translated from Urdu into English for the first time. In chapter 3 of his edited work, *The Rose and the Rock: Mystical and Rational Elements in the Intellectual History of South Asian Islam* (Durham, N.C., 1979), Bruce B. Lawrence throws new light on Sir Sayyid's early phase of religious practice and thought. He detects there rational elements and mystical components important enough to merit serious attention in any critical assessment of Sayyid Ahmad Khan's later contributions.

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AHRIMAN. *See* Ahura Mazdā and Angra Mainyu.

AHURA MAZDĀ AND ANGRA MAINYU. The entities Ahura Mazdā (Av.; Pahl., Ōhrmazd) and Angra Mainyu (the Gathic-Avestan form; Ahra Mainyu in later Avestan; Ahriman in Pahlavi) are often considered the two poles of pre-Islamic dualism in the Zoroastrian tradition. Originally, however, as set forth in Zarathushtra's (Zoroaster's) teachings in the *Gāthās*, they were not the poles of a dualism. Ahura Mazdā transcended the dualistic formula expressed by the opposition of the principles of *asha*, truth (the cosmic, ritual, moral, and social order; equivalent to the Vedic *ṛta*), and *druj*, falsehood. This opposition was represented by two spirits who were, in this earliest formulation, the twin sons of Ahura Mazdā: Spenta Mainyu, the "beneficent spirit" and Angra Mainyu, the "hostile spirit," who chose the truth and the lie, respectively.

The transformation of Zarathushtra's original dualism into the later dualism expressed in the formula "Ōhrmazd versus Ahriman" occurred through the movement known as Zurvanism, whose tendencies and currents appeared in the Achaemenid period (sixth to fourth centuries BCE). In Zurvanism, the two contrasted poles of dualism were no longer conceived as two spirits but were the creator god himself, Ōhrmazd, and the hostile spirit, Ahriman, now become a kind of archdemon, a diabolical power in opposition to the creator, the ruler of a pandemonium symmetrical with the pantheon of positive beings. Zurwān, deified Time, was conceived as a being with indistinct personal features, a kind of *archē* who had started creation and was placed above and prior to his twin sons Ōhrmazd and Ahriman. Ōhrmazd was reduced to the role of symmetrical opponent of his brother, the hostile spirit; his identification with Spenta Mainyu favored such a development. [*See* Zurvanism.]

In the *Gāthās* Ahura Mazdā and Angra Mainyu are not on parallel planes. And the Avesta, taken as a whole, does not reflect the new dualist formula beyond a small degree, in the later sections. The dualistic formula is preserved in Greek sources (in Aristotle; in Eudemus of Rhodes, according to Damascius in *Dubitationes et solutiones de principiis;* and in Theopompus, according to Plutarch in *Isis and Osiris*) and in Christian sources (Armenian and Syriac). The myth of Zurwān is preserved by Eznik of Kolb, Elishe Vardapet (both fifth century CE), Theodore bar Konai (fl. 791 CE), Yoḥannān bar Penkayē, and, most significantly, in the Pahlavi religious literature of the ninth and tenth centuries CE.

The *Bundahishn* (Book of Primordial Creation) symmetrically opposes Ōhrmazd and the other six Amahraspandān (Amesha Spentas) to Ahriman and the other six archdevils: Akōman (Aka Manah, "evil thought"), Indar (Indra), Sāwul (Saurva), Nanghāit (Nānhaithya), Tārīch (Taurvi, "conquering"), Zārīch (Zairik, "yellowish, greenish"). According to Pahlavi texts, and in particular the *Bundahishn,* which is for this question a source of extraordinary significance, Ōhrmazd dwelt in the light, in the supreme heights, omniscient and good, for the duration of Infinite Time, while Ahriman dwelt in the darkness, gifted with "postknowledge" (that is, most probably, with a knowledge not of causes but of effects) and was thirsty for blood. Between them was emptiness, the region where the mixed, *gumēzishn,* could form. The concept of mixture is thus typical of Zoroastrian cosmology and ontology. The loci of Ōhrmazd and Ahriman are, respectively, increate light and increate darkness. When the contest between the two is resolved, thanks to a final apocatastasis, a third age will be initiated, that of *frashgird,* rehabilitation, and Ōhrmazd will reign in eternity, while the rule of Ahriman will be destroyed. Ōhrmazd in his omniscience knew that Ahriman would attack his creation and that, in doing so, he would mix his evil elements with the good. Because he knew everything about the beginning and end of creation, Ōhrmazd could carry out his creation on a transcendental plane, leaving it in such a state for three thousand years. Ahriman, however, did not know Ōhrmazd's nature and power. Driven by envy and his thirst for blood, Ahriman attempted to destroy Ōhrmazd's creation, then produced his own creation of demoniacal beings, horrible, stinking, abysmal, and ignorant. The two then concluded an agreement, proposed by Ōhrmazd: they would fix the duration of their struggle at nine thousand years. During the first three thousand, Ōhrmazd's will would prevail in all things; during the second—the period of the mixed—the will of both would have equal force; in the last Ahriman would be rendered powerless.

There is present here the doctrine of temporal cycles, divided into periods of millennia, that was used especially by Zurvanism with the purpose, above all, of providing an explanation for the origin and predominance of evil in the world. It holds that time is the instrument of Ōhrmazd to bring about the fall of Ahriman; limited time—the nine thousand years of struggle—is a parenthetical insertion within the whole of infinite time, put into action in order to destroy, with its very elapsing, the evil power of the enemy.

As Zoroastrianism developed, Ahriman became to some degree the diabolic counterpart of the creator god; nevertheless, he always remained inferior to Ōhrmazd, and this inferiority derived from his very nature. Like Ōhrmazd, Ahriman gave life to his own creation, but while Ōhrmazd's creation has two aspects, the spritual or ideal, *mēnōg,* and the material, *gētīg,* Ahriman did not succeed in carrying his beyond the spiritual to a material state. He succeeded only in assaulting Ōhrmazd's creation and in contaminating it with his countercreation, the fruit of his great envy. Thus Zoroastrian dualism, as seen in the dualistic formula "Ōhrmazd versus Ahriman," is not a dualism of spirit and matter but one within the spiritual and transcendental realm.

This form of dualism exerted an enormous influence beyond the boundaries of Iran. For instance, it probably influenced the dualistic tendencies that emerged in postexilic Judaism up to the era of the Dead Sea Scrolls. An archaic Zurvanist myth that goes back, like Zurvanism itself (and like the dualism that was expressed in the juxtaposition of Ōhrmazd to Ahriman), to the Achaemenid period, makes Ahriman the ruler of creation until the prearranged time has elapsed. This was in all likelihood the basis of the biblical conception (*Jn.* 16:30) of Satan or Belial as *princeps huius mundi.*

Manichaean dualism, too, knew Ōhrmazd and Ahriman but refused to consider them brothers. Manichaeism, while it made Ahriman the Prince of Darkness, restored Ōhrmazd to his central position, making him, in a typically gnostic formulation, both the Primordial Man and the Savior. [*See* Manichaeism.]

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Translated from Italian by Roger DeGaris

AHURAS. The Iranian term *ahura* ("lord") corresponds to the Vedic *asura*. Whereas in the Vedas *asura* is usually applied to Dyaus-Pitṛ ("father sky"), the Indian equivalent of the Roman Jupiter, in Iran and in the Zoroastrian tradition *ahura* is applied to three divinities: Ahura Mazdā, Mithra, and Apạm Napāt ("son of the waters"). Some scholars see Apạm Napāt as the Iranian counterpart of Varuṇa, the first of the *asura*s, and have called him *Vouruna Apạm Napāt in an attempt to reconstruct a unitary structure of three original Indo-Iranian *asura*s, with Ahura Mazdā corresponding to Asura *Medhā, Mithra to Mitra, and *Vouruna Apạm Napāt to Varuṇa Apạm Napāt (Boyce, 1975). These arguments, however, are not very convincing. Other scholars suppose that at the summit of an ancient Indo-Iranian pantheon was a god called Asura, without further characterization, who survived in Iran to some extent in the Ahura Mazdā of Zarathushtra (Zoroaster), but who in India abandoned the field to Varuṇa (Hillebrandt, 1927; Gershevitch, 1964). This thesis, however, is also not certain.

In both Iran and India, the term *ahura/asura* designates a class of gods or, to be more exact, a class of ruling gods (Dumézil, 1977), but their fate on either side of the Indus was different. Whereas in India the *asura*s came to represent the most archaic divinities, against which the *deva*s, the "young" gods, asserted themselves, in Iran it was one of the *ahura*s, Ahura Mazdā, who displaced all the *daiva*s. Thus, when Zoroastrianism reached a compromise with the ancient polytheism that had originally been condemned by Zarathushtra, the other *ahura*s, such as Mithra and Apạm Napāt, were readmitted to the cult, while the *daiva*s, whose nature was bellicose and violent and who were above all warrior gods (Indra, for example), were totally demonized. It is quite likely that the *ahura*s were able to maintain their privileged position in the Zoroastrian tradition thanks to their ethical nature and to their special function as guardians of *asha* (Vedic, ṛta), truth and order, a fundamental concept of Indo-Iranian religions in general as well as of Zoroastrianism in particular.

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AINU RELIGION. The Ainu are a people whose traditional homeland lay in Hokkaido, southern Sakhalin, and the Kurile islands, although their territory once included southern Kamchatka and the northern part of the main Japanese island (Honshu). Scholarly controversies over their cultural, racial, and linguistic identities remain unresolved. Their hunting-gathering way of life was discontinued with the encroachment of the Russians and the Japanese during the latter half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. Generalizations about Ainu culture or religion are dangerous to make, since not only are there a great many intracultural variations among the Ainu of each region, but differences occur within each group as well. Because the following description is aimed, as much as possible, at the common denominators, it may not fit in toto the religion of a particular Ainu group.

An important concept in the Ainu belief system is the soul. Most beings in the Ainu universe have a soul, and its presence is most conspicuous when it leaves the body of the owner. When one dreams, one's soul frees itself from the sleeping body and travels to places where one has never been. Similarly, a deceased person appears in one's dreams, since the soul of the deceased can travel from the world of the dead to visit one. Dur-

ing shamanistic performances the shaman's soul travels to the world of the dead in order to snatch back the soul of a dead person, thereby reviving him or her.

This belief underlies the Ainu emphasis on the proper treatment of the dead body of human beings and all other soul-owners of the universe. The belief results in elaborate funeral customs, which range from the bear ceremony to the careful treatment of fish bones (because they represent the dead body of a fish). Without proper treatment of the dead body, its soul cannot rest in peace in the world of the dead. For this reason, illnesses serve to remind the Ainu of their misconduct. Shamans are consulted in order to obtain diagnosis and treatment for these illnesses.

When a soul has been mistreated, it exercises the power to punish. The deities, in contrast, possess the power to punish or reward the Ainu at will. Interpretations among scholars as to the identity of the deities range from those proposing that nature be equated with the deities, to those finding that only certain members of the universe are deified. The differences in opinion originate in part from the Ainu's extensive use of the term *kamuy*, their word for "deity" or "deities." An important point in regard to the Ainu concept of deities is Chiri Mashio's interpretation that the Ainu consider all the animal deities to be exactly like humans in appearance and to live just like humans in their own country. The animal deities disguise themselves when visiting the Ainu world in order to bring meat and fur as presents to the Ainu, just as Ainu guests always bring gifts. In this view, then, the bear, which is generally considered the supreme deity, is but the mountain deity in disguise.

Besides the bears, the important deities or *kamuy* include foxes, owls (which are considered to be the deity of the settlement), seals, and a number of other sea and land animals and birds. The importance of each varies from region to region. In addition, the Ainu pantheon includes the fire goddess (Iresu-Huchi), the goddess of the sun and moon (in some regions they are separate deities), the dragon deity in the sky, the deity of the house, the deity of the *nusa* (the altar with *inaw* ritual sticks), the deity of the woods, and the deity of water.

Evil spirits and demons, called variously *oyasi* or *wen-kamuy* ("evil deity"), constitute another group of beings in the universe who are more powerful than humans. They may exercise their destructive power by causing misfortunes such as epidemics. (The smallpox deity is an example.) While some of them have always been demons, others are beings that have turned into demons. When a soul is mistreated after the death of its owner, for example, it becomes a demon. The Ainu pay

a great deal of attention to evil spirits and demons by observing religious rules and performing exorcism rites. A major theme in the Ainu epic poems treats human combat with demons. Characteristically, the deities never directly deal with the demons; rather, they extend their aid to the Ainu, if the latter behave properly.

Of all the rituals of the Ainu, the bear ceremony is by far the most elaborate. It is the only ceremony of the Ainu that occurs in all regions and that formally involves not only all the members of the settlement but those from numerous other settlements as well, thereby facilitating the flow of people and their communication among different settlements. The bear ceremony provides a significant opportunity for male elders to display their wealth, symbolizing their political power, to those from other settlements. Most importantly, from the perspective of the Ainu, the bear ceremony is a funeral ritual for the bear. Its purpose is to send the soul of the bear through a proper ritual so that the soul will be reborn as a bear and will revisit the Ainu with gifts of meat and fur.

The entire process of the bear ceremony takes at least two years and consists of three stages. The hunters capture and raise a bear cub. In the major ceremony, the bear is ritually killed and its soul is sent back to the mountains. Among the Sakhalin Ainu a secondary ceremony follows the major ceremony after several months. A bear cub, captured alive either while still in a den or while ambling with its mother upon emerging from the den, is usually raised by the Ainu for about a year and a half. At times women nurse these newborn cubs. Although the time of the ceremony differs according to the region, it is most often held in the beginning of the cold season; for the Sakhalin Ainu, it takes place just before they move from their coastal settlement to their inland settlement for the cold season.

The ceremony combines deeply religious elements with the merriment of eating, drinking, and dancing. All the participants don their finest clothing and adornments. Prayers are offered to the fire goddess and the deity of the house, but the major focus of the ceremony is on the deity of the mountains, who is believed to have sent the bear as a gift to the humans. After the bear is taken out of the "bear house," situated southwest of the host's house, the bear is killed by the Sakhalin Ainu with two pointed arrows. The Hokkaido Ainu use blunt arrows before they fatally shoot the bear with pointed arrows; then they strangle the already dead or dying bear between two logs. Male elders skin and dress the bear, which is then placed in front of the sacred altar where treasures are hung. Ainu treasures consist primarily of trade goods from the Japanese, such as

swords and lacquerware. These are considered offerings to the deities and function as status symbols for the owner. After preliminary feasting outside at the altar, the Ainu bring the dissected bear into the host's house through the sacred window and continue their feast. Among the Hokkaido Ainu, the ceremony ends when the head of the bear is placed at the altar on a pole decorated with *inaw*. The elder bids a farewell prayer while shooting an arrow toward the eastern sky—an act signifying the safe departure of the deity. The Sakhalin Ainu bring the bear skull stuffed with ritual shavings, bones, eyes, and the penis, if the bear was male, to a sacred bone pile in the mountains. They also sacrifice two carefully chosen dogs, which they consider to be servant-messengers of the bear deities. Although often mistaken as a cruel act by outsiders, the bear ceremony is a ritual whereby the Ainu express their utmost respect for their deity.

Although the bear ceremony is distinctly a male ceremony, in that the officiants are male elders and the women must leave the scene when the bear is shot and skinned, shamanism is not an exclusively male vocation. Sakhalin Ainu shamanism differs considerably from that of the Hokkaido Ainu. Among the former, cultural valuation of shamanism is high; well-regarded members of the society, both men and women, may become shamans. Although shamans sometimes perform rites for divinations of various sorts and for miracle performances, by far the great majority of rites are performed for diagnosis and cure of illnesses. When shamans are possessed by spirits, they enter a trance state, and the spirit speaks through their mouths, providing the client with necessary information, such as the diagnosis and cure of the illness or the location of a missing object. Among the Hokkaido Ainu, whose shamanistic practice is not well recorded, shamans are usually women, who collectively have lower social status than men, although some male shamans are reported to have existed. The Hokkaido Ainu shaman also enters a possession trance, but she does so only if a male elder induces it in her by offering prayers to the deities. Although she too diagnoses illnesses, her function is confined to diagnosis, after which male elders take over and engage in the healing process. Male elders must, however, consult a shaman before they make important decisions for the community.

While Ainu religion is expressed in rituals as well as in such daily routines as the disposal of fish bones, nowhere is it more articulated than in their highly developed oral tradition, which is both a primary source of knowledge about the deities and a guideline for the Ainu conducts. There are at least twenty-seven native genres of oral tradition, each having a label in Ainu. They may be classified into two types: verses, either epic or lyric, sung or chanted; and prose that is narrated. While the prose in some genres is recited in the third person, the more common genre is first person narrative, in which a protagonist tells his own story through the mouth of the narrator-singer. The mythic and heroic epics are very complex and lengthy; some heroic epics have as many as fifteen thousand verses. While the mythic epics relate the activities of deities, the heroic epics concern the culture hero, sometimes called Aynu Rakkuru, who, with the aid of the deities, fought against demons to save the Ainu, thereby becoming the founder of Ainu people. Among the Hokkaido Ainu, the culture hero descended from the world of the deities in the sky and taught the Ainu their way of life, including fishing and hunting, and the rituals and rules governing human society. His marriage, told in various versions, is another prominent theme in the epics. Some scholars interpret the battles fought by the culture hero as being the battles that the Ainu fought against invading peoples.

[*See also* Inaw; Kamuy; *and* Iresu-Huchi. *For a further discussion of bear symbolism and ceremony among the Ainu and other groups, see* Bears.]

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AIRYANA VAĒJAH. According to Zoroastrian belief, Airyana Vaējah (Av.), or Ērān-vēz (MPers.), is the name of the homeland of followers of the Good Religion. In Iranian cosmology Airyana Vaējah is found at the center of the world, in the central region known as Khvaniratha, the first of the seven parts *(karshvar)* into which the earth is divided. Airyana Vaējah is the setting

for the principal events of Zoroastrian sacred history: the history of Gayō-maretan, the first man; of Gav-aēvō-dāta, the uniquely created bull; of Yima, the first king; and later of Zarathushtra (Zoroaster) himself.

Although Airyana Vaējah (lit., "the Aryan expanse") is of a mythical and legendary nature, attempts have been made to assign it a definite location. During the Sasanid period, for instance, it was thought to be in Azerbaijan, the area from which Zarathushtra was believed to have originated. More recently, some scholars have maintained that the original Airyana Vaējah must be placed in Khorezm, but this thesis is supported only by tenuous arguments. It is probable that at the time of Zarathushtra, Airyana Vaējah corresponded, in the minds of Iranian tribesmen, to the region that they actually occupied: the Hindu Kush or the area immediately south of it, which is part of the *Airyō-shayana*, the "seat of the Airya," mentioned in the Avestan hymn to Mithra (*Yashts* 10.13–14).

Airyana Vaējah was first and foremost the home of Zarathushtra and his religion. It was accordingly the best of all lands. The first chapter of the *Vendidad* places it first in the list of the sixteen lands that were created by Ahura Mazdā and that were threatened by the countercreation of Angra Mainyu. In this text its mythical nature is evident. The fact that a cold winter in Airyana Vaējah is said to last ten months is to be explained by the mountainous nature of the land of legend and not, as some have maintained (Marquart, 1901), by the climate of Khorezm.

[*See also* Iranian Religions.]

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Translated from Italian by Roger DeGaris

'Ā'ISHAH BINT ABĪ BAKR (d. AH 59/678 CE), child bride of the prophet Muḥammad and daughter of the first Islamic caliph, Abū Bakr. 'Ā'ishah was born in Mecca several years before the community's emigration from Mecca to Medina in AH 1/622 CE. She was the second in the series of women whom Muḥammad married after the death of his first wife, Khadījah. Although the marriage was doubtless constructed to strengthen the alliance between the Prophet and his early supporter, Abū Bakr, 'Ā'ishah soon became a favorite of her husband. Tales of his delight in her abound. In childhood, she spread her toys before him, and it was in her quarters that he chose to die and requested that his body be buried.

Before and after Muḥammad's death in 632, 'Ā'ishah was involved, either deliberately or inadvertently, in actions of political consequence. The first was a result of youthful thoughtlessness that precipitated a crisis of honor in the Prophet's house. 'Ā'ishah had accompanied her husband on his campaign against the Banū al-Muṣṭaliq in 628, when she was about fifteen years of age. During one of the stops on the return journey to Medina she went in search of a misplaced necklace and so lost herself in this quest that she failed to notice the caravan's departure. Eventually she was found by the caravan's young rear-guard scout, Ṣafwān ibn al-Mu'aṭṭal. The scandal occasioned by her return journey alone with this male escort was eagerly fed by Muḥammad's rivals and enemies. Even among the Prophet's supporters, there were those, such as his son-in-law, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, who urged him to divorce her. (Traditional historians date the cause of 'Ā'ishah's resistance against 'Alī's eventual caliphate to this intervention.) A Qur'anic revelation (24:11–20) finally exonerated 'Ā'ishah and set the legal bounds for any charge of adultery: henceforth, those unable to produce four witnesses to such a charge would themselves be punished. (Both Sunnī and Shī'ī commentators trace the occasion of this revelation to the episode involving 'Ā'ishah.)

In the years following the Prophet's death her political activism was, at times, pronounced. Left a childless widow before she was twenty, 'Ā'ishah was prevented from making another marital alliance by a Qur'anic injunction against the remarriage of Muḥammad's wives (33:53). However, both as a widow of the Prophet and as a daughter of his first successor, the caliph Abū Bakr, 'Ā'ishah was a woman of considerable prominence in the early Muslim community. She used this prominence to further the growing opposition to the third caliph, 'Uthmān. 'Ā'ishah's role in the events that culminated in his assassination is debated. In an effort to exculpate her of any direct role, many historians stress her absence from Medina at the time of the caliph's death.

When 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, for whom her enmity was long-standing, assumed the caliphate, 'Ā'ishah joined two of the Prophet's early supporters, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr, in armed opposition to him. Ostensibly to avenge the murder of 'Uthmān, they gathered forces in Basra (southern Iraq) and met 'Alī in battle in December 656. 'Alī defeated his opponents, but 'Ā'ishah's camel-drawn litter, around which intense fighting raged, was immortalized in the name by which historians came to refer to this event, the Battle of the Camel.

In the two decades that passed from the time of this engagement until her death, 'Ā'ishah lived in relative obscurity in Medina, only occasionally emerging into the light of history. Her memory remains alive in the Muslim community in the many anecdotes about her and in the hundreds of *hadith*s for which she was a transmitter.

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'Ā'ishah is one of the few women in Muslim history to have earned a full-scale biography. This gracefully written work, by the University of Chicago scholar Nabia Abbott, is entitled *Aishah, the Beloved of Mohammed* (Chicago, 1942). While based on extended research in the traditional sources, the book reads like a good historical novel. For a condensed and more prosaic treatment of the events of her life, see W. Montgomery Watt's article "'Ā'ishah bint Abī Bakr," in the new edition of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden, 1960–). Watt's two volumes on the life of the Prophet, *Muhammad at Mecca* (London, 1953) and *Muhammad at Medina* (London, 1956), also carry passing references to 'Ā'ishah. For an account of the Battle of the Camel that emphasizes the role of 'Ā'ishah, see Laura Veccia Vaglieri's "al-Djamal" in the new edition of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden, 1960–).

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ĀJĪVIKAS,

or Ājīvakas, an Indian heterodox sect, founded in the sixth century BCE by Makkhali Gosāla, an approximate contemporary of the Buddha, on the basis of earlier groups of unorthodox ascetics. After a period of popularity, the sect lost ground in northern India, but survived in the south until the fourteenth century or later.

The Founder. Makkhali Gosāla figures in the Pali scriptures of Theravāda Buddhism as one of six heterodox teachers frequently mentioned together as successful founders of ascetic orders. Also among these is Mahāvīra, the founder of Jainism, described under the Pali name Nigantha Nātaputta. In Buddhist Sanskrit sources, Gosāla is mentioned under the name Maskarin Gośālīputra, in the context of the six ascetics. The Śvetāmbara Jaina scriptures record his name as Gosāla Mankhaliputta. The Jain *Bhagavatī Sūtra* is our main source for the story of his association with Mahāvīra. Parts of this account are much elaborated by the later commentator Jinadāsa Gaṇi in his commentary (Skt., *cūrṇi*) to the *Āvaśyaka Sūtra*. From this it appears that Gosāla, a young ascetic of doubtful antecedents, encountered Mahāvīra when the latter had been an ascetic for two years. The pair spent some seven years together, wandering over the Ganges valley, after which they parted company. Then, after six months of severe penance, Gosāla is said to have acquired supernatural powers, and to have proclaimed himself a "conqueror" (*jina*, a title also given to Mahāvīra).

It appears that Gosāla quickly gained a following among many nondescript ascetics who were already known as Ājīvikas, probably implying that they took lifelong *(ājīvāt)* vows. His base was the then-important city of Sāvatthi (Skt., Śrāvastī), near Ayodhyā in central Uttar Pradesh, where he made his headquarters in the workshop of a lay disciple, the potter woman Hālāhalā. Some sixteen years later, he died in the same place. According to the *Bhagavatī Sūtra*, his death took place following a confrontation with Mahāvīra, after which he contracted a high fever and became delirious, but it appears that his own followers declared that he had ended his life by voluntary starvation resulting from a penance of six months' duration. Shortly before his death he is said to have had a conference with his six leading disciples, at which the Ājīvika scriptures were codified. The date of his death cannot be determined exactly, but it appears to have occurred a year or two before the death of the Buddha, approximately 484 BCE.

The Ājīvika Ascetic Order. The naked monks who followed Gosāla appear to have subjected themselves to rigorous and painful penances. The initiation into the Ājīvika order involved pulling out the hair by the roots and grasping a heated lump, presumably of metal. Its members established regular meeting places *(sabhā)* in various towns of the Ganges plain. They seem to have been in demand among the laity as prognosticators, and they were credited with magical powers. The Ājīvika order also enlisted women ascetics, but they are only mentioned in passing and we know nothing about them. As with the Buddhists and Jains, it appears that their most important supporters were wealthy merchants and their families. The Ājīvika monks were frequently accused by their rivals of sexual laxity, and of eating large and sumptuous meals in private to compensate for their public penance and fasting. We have no means of discovering whether these accusations had any truth in them, or whether they were mere products of *odium theologicum*. The fact, however, that both the Buddhists and the Jains looked on the Ājīvikas as their most dangerous rivals is a measure of the popularity of the latter,

particularly in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, when the traditions of the heterodox sects of India were taking shape.

The Ājīvika ascetics often ended their lives voluntarily with a penance lasting six months, during which their intake of food and drink was gradually reduced until they died of hunger and thirst. This practice has something in common with the *sallekhanā* of the Jain monks, and was evidently not carried out in every case.

In the period of the Mauryan empire (fourth to second centuries BCE), or at least during the reign of Aśoka, the Ājīvikas appear to have been particularly influential in the Ganges Plain. In his Seventh Pillar Edict, Aśoka ranks them third, after the Buddhists and Brahmans, in a list of religious groups that he patronized, and before the Jains and "various other sects." This list probably represents the order of merit in the eyes of the king. The importance and popularity of the Ājīvikas at this time may also be gauged from the fact that they were the recipients of a number of artificial caves, about fifteen miles north of Gaya in modern Bihar, not far from the scene of the Buddha's enlightenment. In the Barabar Hills, two caves contain inscriptions stating that they were given to the Ājīvikas in the twelfth year after Aśoka's consecration, and a similar inscription states that a third cave was dedicated in his nineteenth year. A fourth cave, adorned with an impressive facade, contains no inscription, but appears to belong to the same period. In the nearby Nagarjuni Hill, there are three similar caves, with inscriptions to the effect that they were dedicated to the Ājīvikas as shelters during the rainy season by King Daśaratha, one of Aśoka's successors, immediately after his consecration as king—a sure indication of his favor. Taken together, these caves and inscriptions form an impressive record of the importance of the Ājīvikas at the time. The caves are probably the oldest excavations of their kind for the use of ascetics in the whole of India. Although they are not very large, their internal walls are so brilliantly polished that enough light is reflected through the low entrances to make it possible to read a newspaper with ease. These, however, are the only significant archaeological remains of the Ājīvikas to have survived.

After the Mauryan period, the Ājīvikas lost ground and, with the exception of the Tamil sources mentioned below, only a few passing references to them occur in later literature. South Indian evidence, however, shows that they survived there until the fourteenth century. Among the numerous inscriptions recording the transference of village taxes for the upkeep of local temples, at least seventeen mention the Ājīvikas, in most cases in connection with a special Ājīvika tax, presumably paid by lay Ājīvikas. This indicates that they were not looked

on with favor by the local government authorities, and were at a disadvantage in comparison with the more orthodox sects, though the tax does not appear to have been heavy. Of these inscriptions, the greatest concentration is found in Karnataka state to the east and northeast of Bangalore, and in the Kolar district of Tamil Nadu. The presence of Ājīvikas is attested as far north as the district of Guntur, just south of the Krishna River in Andhra Pradesh, and as far south as Kilur, about forty miles inland from Pondicherry.

Three important Tamil religiophilosophical texts, *Maṇimēkalai*, *Nīlakēśi*, and *Śivajñānasiddhiyar*, composed by Buddhists, Jains, and Śaivites respectively, contain outlines of Ājīvika doctrines. The most useful and informative of these is *Nīlakēśi*, probably written in the ninth century CE. In this text the heroine Nīlakēśi visits a number of teachers one after the other in search of the truth. Among these are the Buddha himself and Pūraṇaṉ, the leader of the Ājīvikas, a figure of great dignity dwelling in a hermitage adorned with fragrant flowers. Probably the latest surviving evidence of the Ājīvikas is to be found in the astrological text *Jātaka-pārijāta*, written toward the latter part of the fifteenth century by Vaidyanātha Dīkṣita.

Doctrines of the Ājīvikas. The teachings of Makkhali Gosāla are summarized in this passage from the Buddhist *Dīgha Nikāya*:

> There is neither cause nor basis for the sins of living beings; they become sinful without cause or basis. Neither is there cause or basis for the purity of living beings; they become pure without cause or basis. There is no deed performed by oneself or others, no human action, no strength, no courage, no human endurance or human prowess [that can affect one's future, in this life or in later ones]. All beings, all that have breath, all that are born, all that have life, are without power, strength and virtue, but are developed by destiny, chance and nature, and experience joy and sorrow in the six classes [of existence]. . . .
>
> There are . . . 8,400,000 great *kalpa*s through which fool and wise alike will take their course and [ultimately] make an end of sorrow. There is no question of bringing unripe *karma* to fruition, nor of exhausting *karma* already ripened, by virtuous conduct, by vows, by penance, or by chastity. That cannot be done. *Saṃsāra* is measured as with a bushel, with its joy and sorrow and its appointed end. It can neither be lessened nor increased, nor is there any excess or deficiency of it. Just as a ball of thread will, when thrown, unwind to its full length, so fool and wise alike will take their course, and make an end of sorrow.
>
> (*Dīgha Nikāya*, vol. 1, pp. 53–54)

This eloquent passage makes clear the fundamental principle of Ājīvika philosophy, namely *niyati*, usually translated as "fate" or "destiny." The Ājīvikas were, in fact, fatalists and determinists. Buddhism, Jainism, and

orthodox Hinduism, on the other hand, all emphasize the power of human effort *(puruṣakāra)* to affect human destiny. This proposition Gosāla and his followers categorically denied. Every being is impelled by *niyati* to pass through immense cycles of birth, death and rebirth, according to a rigidly fixed order until, in his last birth, he becomes an Ājīvika monk, dies after a long final penance, and enters a state which the Ājīvikas appear to have called *nirvāṇa*. Probably the Ājīvikas, like the Jains but unlike the Buddhists, believed that the final state of bliss was to be found in the complete isolation of the soul from matter and from other souls.

In any case, they believed that free will was an illusion. The criminal might imagine that he consciously chose to rob and murder, and the pious believer might think that he gave up the world and became an ascetic of his own free will; in fact, the power of *niyati* left only one course open to them. This doctrine of *niyati* seems to have been developed by the South Indian Ājīvikas into a theory suggesting that of Parmenides, that the universe was, on final analysis, completely static. "Though we may speak of moments," says the Ājīvika teacher Pūraṇan in *Nīlakēśi*, "there is really no time at all." This doctrine was known as *avicalita-nityatvam*, or "unmoving permanence."

The cosmology of the Ājīvikas was evidently very complex, but it is impossible to interpret accurately the ambiguous and obscure phrases referring to this in the texts. The Ājīvikas certainly postulated an immensely large universe, which passed through an immense number of time cycles. Each soul *(jīva)* was bound to transmigrate through eighty-four *lākh*s (1 *lākh* = 100,000) of such cycles before reaching its inevitable goal of release from transmigration. For the southern Ājīvikas, however, even this desirable goal might not be final, for it appears that only a few souls were fated to remain in bliss for all eternity; the rest achieved only "cyclic release" *(maṇḍala-mokṣa)*, and were ultimately compelled to return to the world and begin another cycle of transmigration.

The southern Ājīvikas appear to have absorbed the doctrine of seven atomic substances attributed by the Buddhists to another contemporary of the Buddha, Pakudha Kaccāyana. These seven substances are earth, water, fire, air, joy, sorrow, and life. According to the Pali version of Pakudha's doctrine, these seven are uncreated and unchanging, "as firm as mountains, as stable as pillars." The Tamil *Maṇimēkalai*, however, states in its treatment of Ājīvika doctrine that the atoms combine to form molecules in fixed proportions. The soul was also atomic, in the sense that it could not be divided, but in its natural disembodied state it is said to be of immense size, 500 leagues *(yojana)* in extent.

There are indications that some of the South Indian Ājīvikas made a kind of divinity out of their founder Makkhali Gosāla, called in Tamil Maṛkali; he has become a god *(tēvan)* who, according to the text *Nīlakēśi*, occasionally descends to earth to stimulate the faith of his followers. For this school of Ājīvikas, the earthly teacher of the sect is Pūraṇan, evidently the same as Pūraṇa Kassapa, another of the six heterodox teachers of the Pali scriptures.

Thus it appears that, at the end of their existence, one school of Ājīvikas was assimilating its teaching to that of the devotional Vaiṣṇavas, while another, closer to the original teaching of Gosāla, was slowly absorbed by the Digambara Jains. No definite survivals of Ājīvikism can be traced in any branch of modern Indian religious life, but it is possible that echoes of Ājīvika determinism may be heard in some of the gnomic wisdom of South India, for instance: "Though a man exert himself over and over again, he still only gets what comes on the appointed day."

[*See also the biography of Gosāla.*]

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A. L. Basham

AKAN RELIGIONS.

The Akan are a cluster of peoples numbering some five to six million, most of whom speak a language known as Twi. They occupy the mainly forested region of southern Ghana and the eastern Ivory Coast and include the coastal Fanti to the south. They are divided into over a dozen independent kingdoms, the best known of which is the Ashanti (Asante) kingdom whose capital city is Kumase in central Ghana.

Most Akan are forest dwellers, with yams and other

root crops as staples; plantains, oil palms, and other trees are important. Cocoa, palm oil, gold, and timber have long been the main exports, producing a high standard of living. The pattern of settlement is based upon towns, each town being the seat of a king or chief. Village farms are set between the towns.

The Akan are divided into eight matrilineal clans (abusua), branches of which are dispersed across all the Akan kingdoms; in theory exogamous, the clans are neither corporate nor political units. The local branches of clans are divided into matrilineal lineages or "houses," the basic property-owning residential and domestic groups. Across this matrilineal organization runs that of patrilines, noncorporate groups known as ntoro among the Ashanti; in most areas these groupings are today of far less importance than in the past.

The Akan believe that each human being is composed of three main elements: blood (mogya), deriving from the matrilineal clan and giving formal social status; character, or personality, from the patriline; and soul (kra), which comes from God and is one's formal destiny (nkrabea). A spiritual bond is thought to exist between a father and his child; the sunsum ("spirit") of the father is said to provide strength and protection from spiritual attack or danger for his child. There is a certain amount of confusion and contradiction about the meaning of the terms sunsum and kra but it is certain that they are not synonymous. The kra is the permanent component of the living person. It is set free to return to the land of the ancestors only after death, though it may temporarily leave during sleep or severe illness. Usually the kra is protective; if a person recovers from illness or an accident he may give offerings to his kra in order to express gratitude for his purification and ensure further prosperity. In such a rite, he will generally be accompanied by a child who shares the same kra day, that is, who was born on the same day of the week (those born on the same day of the week are said to have the same kra). A person cannot change his own destiny, though it is believed that witches and other jealous persons may try to attack a person's soul.

The Akan peoples have long been in contact with Muslims from the Sahara, but the religious impact of Islam has been rather slight. They were affected by European colonial powers moving inland from the coast from the fifteenth century onward, and by Christian missionaries from the early nineteenth century. The colonial impact was powerful, fueled especially by the desire for gold and slaves. But despite the colonial penetration, and prolonged exposure to different economic, political, educational, and religious influences, the traditional religions of the Akan peoples have persisted strongly up through the contemporary era. Although there are wide variations among the Akan kingdoms, there are many similarities in cosmology and religious practice. Mobility of whole segments of population and of ritual shrines and individual worshipers has brought about many common religious features throughout the region.

Akan religion has few important myths other than the one that explains the split between God and humankind. In this myth the supreme being, Nyame, became annoyed by the noise made by an Ashanti woman who was pounding fufu (mashed and pounded yams or plantains) in a wooden mortar and he withdrew far away from mankind as a result. [See Nyame.] Another version attributes his withdrawal to the fact that the Ashanti have fufu-pounding sticks that are extremely long; when the women made fufu, the ends of their sticks hit Nyame up there in the sky, and so he went farther and farther away. There are also clan myths explaining their separate origins and thousands of proverbs and aphorisms suffused with religious referents.

High God. The supreme being, known as Nyame, Onyankopon, Odomankama, and other names, is said to be omniscient and omnipotent, the creator of all the world, and the giver of rain and sunshine. Born on Saturday, both he and Asase Yaa, the Thursday-born Goddess of the Earth, are formally appealed to in all prayers, although in general, it is the ancestors and deities who mediate between God and man. Nearly all Ashanti houses formerly had a small shrine dedicated to Nyame in the form of a pot placed in the fork of a certain tree (Nyame dua, "God's tree"). Similarly shaped shrines are also found in other Akan kingdoms, though presently only in the more remote villages; there, however, the bowl in the forked God's tree usually contains a protective suman of one kind or another (see below).

Ancestors. The ancestors (asaman or asamanfo) live together in a place variously said to be beyond a high mountain or across a river. They are believed to know what the living do on earth and may help those in need, or punish strife or wrong-doing by causing illness or even death. The ancestors of the departed heads of an ordinary lineage watch over and support members of that lineage; those of the chiefly lineage do so for both the royal lineage and for the members of the entire town.

Black stools, which are blackened with blood and other matter, function as shrines that act as temporary resting places for the ancestral spirits of a particular matrilineage when they are summoned during rituals. (Ancestors can be contacted anywhere at anytime.) Royal and nonroyal black stools are similar in appearance and function; the former, however, are considered more sacred and powerful. Black stools are kept in a

special stool-house within the family compound or palace. There are very elaborate funeral ceremonies for chiefs including secondary funerary observances and, formerly, mass human sacrifices.

Libations may be poured at any time by anyone to inform the ancestors of important events, but the black stool is the responsibility of the head of the lineage. Usually the royal black stools are cared for by officials who are not members of the royal lineage but are related to the king through the patriline. There are no mediums (okomfo) for the ancestors, though individuals do occasionally become possessed by them.

The year is divided into nine ritual units (each of forty-two days), the first day of each being called adae. At adae some deities are celebrated and ancestors are venerated through the black stool which is cleansed and then anointed. All Akan kingdoms have an annual celebration, called Apo or Odwira, among other names. A complex festival, Apo consists of a number of ritual actions including purification of the accumulated sins and defilement of the previous year, anointment of the shrines of the deities and the ancestral black stools, celebration of the first-fruits (whence the name Yam Festival), and the renewal of the power of the king and thus the kingdom.

The Deities. The Akan distinguish between two main kinds of deity: abosom (sg., obosom) and asuman (sg., suman). While essentially the same kind of power, the former are said to be "large" and personalized, the latter "small" and not personalized. Nevertheless, an obosom perceived to be weak may come to be classified as a suman and vice versa. There are also thought to be small forest beings with backward feet (mmoatia) and terrifying giants (sasabonsam).

There are hundreds of abosom; they may be invoked individually or as a group. They are said to be the "children of God" or "God's messengers," and are identified with lakes, rivers, rocks, and other natural objects. Generally they are thought able to cure illness and social problems, reveal witches, and witness the truth of an event; at the same time they are dangerous to deal with because of their destructive powers and capricious ways. They are free-ranging but can be temporarily located in shrines in the form of clay pots of water, cloth-wrapped bundles, or mounds of sacred ingredients inside a brass pan. Ritual specialists who "own" a deity are called osofo or obosomfo. There are also mediums (okomfo) who become possessed by a deity and, whether priest or priestess, are considered to be its "wife."

Asuman are man-made objects in which mystical power resides. They range from small non-personalized amulets that contain magical powers in themselves, to more personalized ones that resemble abosom. In general, asuman are lower in the hierarchy of deities than are abosom and act as their messengers. They are appealed to for day-to-day problems, and their powers are said to be more specific than those of abosom.

The popularity of a particular deity will rise and fall. If it does not produce results or if a shrine official dies and is not replaced, there will be a loss of patrons and the shrine will be called "dry." Powerful deities, on the other hand, may attract adherents across great distances. Aduru refers to both Western medicine and to herbal remedies. No offerings are made to aduru, and they are not personalized. While there is clarity of classification in the terminology used for these entities (abosom, asuman, and aduru), in practice there is much overlapping and ambiguity.

In all Akan societies disease, infertility, and untimely death are of central importance. Herbalists are consulted for specific ailments and broken bones, but since illness generally involves the total moral person and is not simply seen as a physical condition, mediums are consulted to discover if the illness or repeated deaths in one family are caused by an ancestor, deity, or by other means. People of high status are especially worried about being poisoned by "bad medicine." Witches are said to be mostly women who work in covens in the spiritual world; it is believed that they attack only members of their own families.

Christianity and Islam. Over the past century many antiwitchcraft cults have appeared and spread. Most notable was the Abirewa cult in the early twentieth century, followed more recently by the Tigare and other cults from the north. New Christian cults also rise and fall, attracting large numbers of followers who concurrently attend mainstream Protestant or Catholic churches (as opposed to Pentecostal or Spiritualist churches) or are adherents of traditional religious deities.

The growing influence of Christianity in the south (linked often with the expansion of Western education, cocoa production, and trade), and of Islam in the north have weakened active participation in abosom and asuman cults, and the latter have in some cases faded with the deaths of older practitioners. The law courts are now replacing the abosom shrines for the resolution of conflicts. Beliefs in ancestors, linked as they are to the matrilineage and to kingship, are more tenacious. It must be stressed that in no case has Christianity replaced traditional religion; rather the two coexist side by side in a complex and uneasy relationship. Because Christianity is linked in most kingdoms to education and, therefore, to wealth, it has become the prestige religion. Traditional religion continues because for most people it is perceived to be the most efficacious system

of belief, one that continues to endow the world with meaning. Traditional deities are still perceived by many to be powerful and thus to affect people's moral behavior, while traditional rituals of many kinds are still deemed to be necessary. Kings, chiefs, and most palace and clan officials adhere to traditional religious practices as part of their formal political-religious roles. This is likely to continue so long as the kingship is retained even though some of the rites are condemned by the Christian churches.

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AKBAR (1542–1605), emperor of India in the Timurid, or Mughal, dynasty. He was born on 15 October 1542 in Umarkot, Sind, where his father, Humāyūn, had fled after being driven from Delhi, his capital, by his Afghan rivals. Akbar was proclaimed emperor in 1556 under the tutelage of his father's military commander, Bairam Khan, but by 1560 had succeeded in asserting his own power. His reign is one of the most memorable periods of Indian history not only because of his creation of a powerful empire but also because of his apotheosis as the ideal Indian ruler. This image of Akbar owes much to the literary genius of Abū al-Faẓl 'Allāmī, his trusted friend, administrator, and biographer, as well as to the admiration of the nineteenth-century British rulers, who viewed him as their own precursor as the unifier of India. Later, Indian nationalists saw him as the great exemplar of social and religious toleration, which they believed necessary for a democratic, independent India.

Akbar was a ruler of intelligence, ambition, and restless curiosity, who exhibited great skill in selecting and controlling his officials. Very early he seems to have determined to build a strong, centralized administration, while pursuing an aggressive policy of territorial expansion. His famous definition of a king, as "a light emanating from God, a ray from the world-illuminating sun," indicates his conception of his role.

Throughout his reign, Akbar was engaged in warfare with neighboring kingdoms. As soon as the central territories around Delhi and Agra were secured, he moved south and east. In 1568, he captured Chitor, a famous stronghold of the Rajput chiefs, champions of Hinduism in North India. In subsequent battles other Rajput princes submitted to him. After defeating the Rajputs, Akbar took them into his service as generals and administrators and took many of their daughters into his royal harem. His marriage alliances with these Hindu princesses have often been interpreted as signs of his religious toleration, but they were more likely acknowledgments of the submission of the Rajputs.

After the Rajput conquest, Akbar defeated the wealthy Muslim kingdom of Gujarat in 1573, and in 1575 the Muslim ruler of Bengal submitted. In all areas, frequent uprisings by military leaders against Akbar were a reminder that Mughal power was dependent on continued assertion of central authority.

It was this need for centralized control that led Akbar to reorganize the bureaucratic structure of his empire and to reform the revenue system. He built upon the work of his predecessors, particularly Sher Shah (r. 1538–1545), in carrying out new land assessments and in bringing as much territory as possible under the direct control of imperial authority.

Akbar's religious policies have been the subject of much controversy, leading to his being regarded as an apostate to Islam, a near convert to Christianity, the inventor of a new religion, and a liberal exponent of toleration. The truth seems to be that in his genuine curiosity about religion he encouraged all varieties of religious practitioners, including Hindu *yogin*s and Muslim *fakīr*s as well as European Jesuits who visited his court. On the other hand, it was probably a concern for the unity of his empire that led him to abolish *jizyah*, the discriminatory tax on non-Muslims. Bada'ūnī, a contemporary historian, while he denounced Akbar as an apostate, says that he spent whole nights in praise of God and would be found "many a morning alone in prayer and meditation in a lonely spot."

Discussions of Akbar's attitude toward orthodox Islam have centered mainly on two incidents. One was his acceptance, in 1579, of a declaration by some major Islamic theologians stating that he, as a just ruler, could, in the case of disputes between *mujtāhid*s (interpreters of Islamic law), decide which was the correct interpretation. Although orthodox Islamic theologians denounced his action, it was not a denial of Islamic practice, but rather an assertion of his sovereignty and his near equality with the caliph of the Ottoman empire.

The other incident was Akbar's promulgation in 1582

of the *Dīn-i-ilāhī* (The Divine Faith), a syncretic statement that owed much to the Ṣūfī tradition of Islam as well as to Hinduism and Zoroastrianism. Emphasizing the union of the soul with the divine, it insisted on such ethical precepts as almsgiving, chastity, vegetarianism, and kindness to all. Elsewhere, Akbar indicated that he believed in the transmigration of souls.

For orthodox Muslims, the *Dīn-i-ilāhī* made clear that Akbar intended to replace Islam with his own heresy, but in fact there is no evidence that it had any followers outside his immediate entourage. It is possible, however, that he dreamed of the "divine faith" becoming the possession of all men, thus ending "the diversity of sects and creeds" that, he once complained, was the source of strife in his kingdom.

Akbar died at Agra on 3 October 1605. His court, one of the most magnificent in the world, was a center of culture and the arts. The great Mughal achievements in painting and architecture had their beginning in his time, and music, poetry, and calligraphy were encouraged. The measure of his importance in Indian history is that the cultural achievements of his age along with his administrative structures continued to characterize the Mughal dynasty for over two centuries, even in its long period of decline in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and remained a model for later rulers.

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AKHENATON, properly Akhenati; first misread as Khuenaton; also Ikhnaton; also known as Amunhotep IV, king of Egypt (c. 1360–1344 BCE); tenth of the fourteen successive rulers making up the eighteenth dynasty. Among all the scores of Egyptian kings no other was worshiped so fervently in his own time as "the son of the sun" or abhorred so completely by subsequent generations as "the criminal." Since his rediscovery in modern times he has been equally controversial, hailed initially as the first monotheist and denigrated later as

a not-so-clever politician. The Egyptians were unable to reconsider his case since they expunged him from their history, but modern scholars have been able to do so, and now at long last a more balanced view of Akhenaton is beginning to emerge.

Akhenaton's religion, like all Egyptian religion, was of a markedly dualistic nature, with singularity on the one hand and plurality on the other: "lone/one god Aton" and "happy/well-supplied god Akhenaton." How did that situation come about? Was a single worldview diffused and differentiated by population movement? Were various worldviews collected and assimilated by political unification? Were two worldviews balanced and refined by theological speculation? In Akhenaton's hymn (often compared to David's Psalm 104) all three themes appear:

> Though alone you overflow in your forms as living Aton, you rise and you shine, you depart and approach; of yourself you make millions of forms.

> As noon sun your sunbeams restrain all the lands to the limit of all your creations, and to subdue them for your son so beloved you reach out to their limit.

> How refined your designs, you millennial lord, with a Nile in the sky [the annual rain, believed to have its source in the Milky Way] for the hill folk and flocks who must walk [the inhabitants of Syria-Palestine, without navigable waterways], and a Nile that returns underground [the annual inundation, believed to have its source in subterranean springs] for the canal nation [Egypt, with its navigable waterways].

Thus do Akhenaton's expressions convey the very essence of Egyptian religious thought, with a clarity and conciseness not achieved at any other time in the history of Egypt.

Akhenaton's policies were not unprecedented. Three times in Egyptian history the same sequence of events took place. First southern arms attacked and conquered the north; then northern religion assailed and infiltrated the south. The first phase culminated in unification of the country (c. 3100, 2050, 1550 BCE). The second phase centered around a change of dynasty (from the second to the third, c. 2700 BCE; from the eleventh to the twelfth, c. 2000 BCE; from the eighteenth to the nineteenth, c. 1300 BCE). It was marked by (1) religious change in the south, leading to a shift of emphasis toward solar deities; (2) a search for new land (to pay royal supporters?), leading to northward relocation of the capital; (3) an artistic flowering in naturalistic (nonanthropomorphic) solar style; (4) a literary flowering of the contemporary spoken language in propagandistic texts lauding solar deities and their kingly incarnations.

ebrated in the first millennium BCE. The former was held at this time in Nisan, the first month (although the city of Uruk had another Akitu, in Tishre), and lasted from the first till the twelfth of the month. The Babylon festival had national importance: the king participated and the festival centered around Marduk, patron god of Babylon and head of the national pantheon of Babylonia. The historical chronicles even record the arrival of the king and the absence of the festival during the years in which it was not held.

What is known about the festival is fragmentary and obscure, but certain features can be determined. The first few days of Nisan were spent in ritual preparations. On the fourth day the king went to Borsippa to bring the god Nabu, considered the son of Marduk, who thereupon began his ritual procession to Babylon. Meanwhile, in Babylon, the epic *Enuma elish* was read before the statue of Marduk. On the fifth day of Nisan, the shrines of Marduk and Nabu were purified and the king arrived from Borsippa. He entered the temple in Babylon and was greeted by the priest, who abased him by divesting him of his royal insignia and slapping him across his face. The priest then led him into the shrine and had him kneel before the divine statue. The king assured the god that he had not been negligent of Babylon, the temple, or the citizenry, and he was then reinvested with his insignia.

On the sixth day of Nisan the other gods of Babylonia (represented by their cult statues) arrived to assemble in Babylon. On the eighth day the king "took Marduk by the hand" and led him out of his temple to the courtyard and then to the Shrine of Destinies, where he met the other gods and was proclaimed sovereign among them. The king then again "took Bel [Marduk] by the hand" and led him and the other gods in a grand procession along the street to the Euphrates. The gods boarded boats, went down the river for a short distance, disembarked, and proceeded to the Akitu house. The events that took place there are not clearly known. There was a banquet of the gods, which some scholars have termed a "cultic picnic." In addition, most scholars believe that the battle between Marduk and Tiamat (the primeval ocean; perhaps mytho-politically associated with the southern Sea Land) was reenacted in some way at the Akitu house, either as a ritual drama with human actors or by a symbolic setting up of the statue of Marduk. This hypothesis is supported by an obscure line in a commentary that at the Akitu, Marduk sits enthroned on Tiamat; further evidence is Sennacherib's report that when he rebuilt the Akitu building at Ashur (Assur), he decorated its doors with a scene of the god (in this case Ashur, patron god of Assyria) defeating Kingu, Tiamat's general. The most compelling proof of

a ritual commemoration of the battle is the relationship of the Akitu festival to the *Enuma elish* myth: the *Enuma elish* was read as part of the festive overture, and the two divine assemblies (on the eighth and eleventh days of Nisan) correspond to the two assemblies of the *Enuma elish*. On the eleventh day the gods returned to Babylon and held another solemn assembly in the "shrine of the destinies," at which time the destinies of the land were fixed and another banquet was held.

These features relate the Akitu celebration to the events recorded in the *Enuma elish* (that is, to the victory of Marduk over Tiamat) and to Marduk's enthronement as head of all the gods. The assemblage of the gods in Babylon indicates that the gods annually renewed their consent to be governed. The participation of the king, his abasement, and his reinvestiture indicate that royal power in Babylonia at this period was connected to the royal power of Marduk and that therefore both kingship and the organizational power of the universe were renewed and celebrated yearly at this Akitu festival.

However, the Akitu festival is much older than the *Enuma elish*, and the political elements of the festival may be an overlay upon more antique elements. The Babylonian festival included the celebration of a "sacred marriage" between Marduk and his spouse Sarpanitu, held either at the Akitu house or immediately after the return to Babylon. This sacred marriage drama, whether effected in the Akitu through the use of divine statues or through the actions of human participants, was an ancient practice in Mesopotamia. Other elements in the festival known from first-millennium Babylon—purificatory rituals, magico-symbolic rituals, and numerous sacrificial offerings—do not appear to be part of this great drama of Marduk. They are probably related to the ancient agricultural rites of the original Akitu festival, and to the calendrical celebration of the New Year that took place in Nisan. Neither the ancient Akitu nor the Babylonian Marduk festival seems to have included celebration of the death and resurrection of the god, however. Earlier reports that this was so were based on an erroneous reading of the *Tribulations of Marduk*, which relates the events of the Assyrian capture and the return of the statue of Marduk to the Akitu festival. This may indicate that the events at the Akitu house represented not only Marduk's victory but his near-defeat.

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AKIVA BEN JOSEPH. *See* 'Aqiva' ben Yosef.

AKKADIAN RELIGION. *See* Mesopotamian Religions.

AKKAH. The Saami (Lapp) woman had to observe taboos on *passe* ("holy") acts and places. She had to comply with restrictions that applied to the holy area in the *kota* (hut), to the holy places in the environment, and to the path on which the drum of the *noaidie* (shaman) was transported from one dwelling place to another. Women were excluded from some of the sacrificial ceremonies, and a man's hunting implements were thought to be unclean and of no use if a woman happened to step over them. But although she was looked on as ritually unclean and dangerous, the Saami woman was not without protection from supernatural powers; she was in the hands of mighty goddesses known as the Akkah.

According to one version of a creation myth found among the Saami of Scandinavia, a soul is created by Radien-Pardne, who has received his power from his father, Radien ("the ruler"). Radien-Pardne delivers the soul to Madder-Aiia, the ur-father, who takes it into his belly, journeys around the sun, and then hands it over to Madder-Akka, the ur-mother. She creates a body for the soul and gives the fetus to one of her daughters. If it is given to her first daughter, Sarakka, the fetus will be made into a female; if Juksakka, the second daughter, receives it, it will be male. After it is assigned a sex, the body is turned over to the mortal woman who will bear it. It is said that Madder-Akka and one of her daughters are at the woman's side during the birth so they can help her. When the child begins to walk, it is protected by Ugsakka, the third daughter of Madder-Akka. She also guards the entrance so that no malevolent spirits may enter the room.

The goddesses dwell in the *kota*. Madder-Akka is said to live under the floor of the *kota*, Sarakka in the neighborhood of the hearth, and Juksakka and Ugsakka near the entrance. The cult of the four female deities, with the exception of that of Sarakka, was practiced only by women. Sarakka, the most loved of the goddesses, was referred to as the protector of the home in general, and as such she shares many traits with Mother Fire, an important figure in northern Eurasian mythology. Like Sarakka, Mother Fire received daily offerings of food and drink at the hearth, assisted at births, was the giver of the female sex, and protected not only women but also men.

It is said that people offered drinks to Sarakka before they attended Christian services, asking her to help them conceal their "heathenism." Before Holy Communion, which they were forced to receive, people drank to Sarakka's health and asked for her forgiveness. Furthermore, it was probably Sarakka, alone or merged with Madder-Akka, who was worshiped in the cult of the Virgin Mary, which became widespread in later centuries. The goddesses also gave fertility to animals and in turn received sacrificial offerings: food, drink, and animals.

Akka means "old woman" and also, in some dialects, "wife." *Madder* signifies "origin, root, earth," and in present-day Saami usage *madder-akka* means "female ancestor" or "great-grandmother." The *sar* in *Sarakka* is probably derived from the verb *saaret* ("to separate, to split, to divide"); the goddess separates the child from the mother's uterus. *Jukse* is translated as "bow," and *ukse* means "door" or "entrance."

The people of Kola believed in a goddess called Sjantaik ("birth mother") who, like the four deities in western Lapland, was concerned with the needs of women and the fertility of both men and animals. The Saami in Finland had a deity named Madder-Akku, similar in name to the Scandinavian Saami's Madder-Akka but different in function. Madder-Akku was the goddess for the blind and deaf and for those who lost their way in the wilderness. The *madder* in her name indicates her connection with the origin of man and with the earth.

Scholars who believed that the old Saami religion was derived from Scandinavian ideas classified the four Akkah as a reflection of the Scandinavian conception of household spirits, *bolvättar*, or of that of the Norns, the Nordic beings who decided a man's fate. However, Madder-Akka has a counterpart in the northern Eurasian pantheon, and she is a variant of the Great Mother. The western Saami belief that she fulfills her tasks with the help of her daughters may, however, have been influenced by Nordic ideas.

Death is also ruled by a female being, Jabme-Akka. She was as important as the Ur-mother and can perhaps be understood as an aspect of her.

[*See also* Saami Religion.]

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AKSAKOV, IVAN (1823–1886), Russian publicist, Slavophile, and pan-Slavist. Aksakov had a mixed career as civil servant, banker, and journalist. He accepted with all other Slavophiles that religion was the decisive factor in the shaping of a nation and that the essence of Russian national life *(narodnost')* was inseparably bound up with Orthodoxy. But he was painfully aware that Orthodoxy labored under manifold constraints in his milieu; as a convinced church member he campaigned in a cogent and constructive manner for their diminution. He regretted the bureaucratization of the Russian church administration and the subjugation (often subservience) of the clergy to the state which was its result, if not its cause. Aksakov's journalism was inhibited by an official ban on his work as editor (1853). Nevertheless, he contributed regularly to such publications as *Moskovskii sbornik* (1846–1847, 1852), *Russkaia beseda* (1858–1860), and *Den'* (1860–1865).

Aksakov was less religiously oriented than the early Slavophiles. He also differed from them in his cautious appraisal of the Russian peasant (in his opinion, hardly the paragon of humility and faith as usually depicted). At the same time, he went beyond them in eventually projecting a historiographical (pan-Slavic) scheme in which the Russian people—not least because of their Orthodox heritage—would play a central role in the development (initially, the liberation) of other Slavic nations. The West, he believed, was seriously inhibited and undermined by its adherence to other creeds, whether Catholic or Protestant. Least favored of all, and viewed as renegades, were Slavic nations with a loyalty to Rome (notably Poland).

Aksakov raised funds for a Russian expeditionary force to aid the Serbs against the Turks (1876) and effectively promoted Russia's entry into war "for the faith of Christ" and in support of the Bulgarians (1877). In the aftermath of the Bulgarian episode, the climax of his career, Aksakov was even mentioned as a possible king for the newly established state.

Aksakov's appeal to the nationalism (and anti-Semitism) of his people was to persist during the last decade of his life. His funeral in 1886 was attended by several hundred thousand admirers.

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SERGEI HACKEL

AKSUMITE RELIGION. Civilization first appeared in the Ethiopian highlands in the fifth century before the common era. It was apparently brought by Semitic-speaking immigrants from South Arabia, who transplanted to Ethiopia many of the cultural and artistic traditions of ancient Sheba. They first established themselves in and around Yeha (formerly called Ava), near modern Adwa. In the early centuries of the common era, power shifted northward to Aksum, which remains to this day the most important religious center in Ethiopia. At the height of their power, the rulers of Aksum claimed dominion as far west as the Nile Valley and as far east as the highlands of Yemen. The kingdom of Aksum was converted to Christianity in the fourth century, long before any other region in the interior of Africa.

Comparatively little is known of the religion of pre-Christian Ethiopia. Only fragmentary information is afforded by classical authors, by the victory stelae erected

by a few Aksumite rulers, and by the evidence of archaeology. Some additional details can be inferred on the basis of parallels with the better-known religions of South Arabia.

During the Yeha period, the Ethiopian religion seems to have been little different from that of Sheba. The major deities were the familiar Semitic triad of the Sun, the Moon, and Venus. In the Aksumite period a somewhat different triad emerged, consisting of Ashtar (Venus), the sea god Behr, and the earth god Medr. The sun was a female deity, called by the Sabaean name Zat-Badar. As the military power of Aksum expanded, the war god Mahram assumed increasing importance and became the special tutelary of the Aksumite rulers.

At Yeha, Aksum, and various provincial towns there were temples and altars dedicated to several of the principal deities. Temple architecture followed closely the traditions of South Arabia. The buildings stood upon an elevated, stepped platform and were approached by a monumental stairway. Very few interior details of the temples have survived, but the exterior walls were embellished with various patterns of projecting and recessed paneling. Outside the temples were votive stelae and offering tables, many of them commemorating the military victories of particular rulers. Animal and also human sacrifices were apparently a regular feature of the victory celebrations.

The most extraordinary monuments of Aksumite religious architecture are the great stone stelae erected over the tombs of many rulers. They are elaborately carved in the form of miniature skyscrapers, with a false door at the bottom and row upon row of false windows above. They are, however, devoid of inscription. Underground, the royal dead were interred in large rock-cut burial chambers, but these have been so thoroughly plundered that no offerings have ever been found in them. For this reason, and in the absence of inscriptions, it is difficult to form an impression of the part that mortuary ritual played in the religious life of the ancient Ethiopians.

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WILLIAM Y. ADAMS

'ALAWĪYŪN (sg., 'Alawī; modern English rendering, Alawis, Alawites; French, Alaouites; sometimes called Nuṣayrīyah). The Arabic word *'Alawī* designates, broadly speaking, a follower of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. Next to the prophet Muḥammad, 'Alī, Muḥammad's paternal cousin and son-in-law, is perhaps the most important personality in the religious and political history of Islam. He remains a force to contend with in the daily life of Muslims today, especially among the Shī'ah (from *shī'at 'Alī*, the "party" or followers of 'Alī): "Yā 'Alī, madad" ("O 'Alī, help!") is a moving intercessionary expression often heard in Shī'ī circles. The word *Shī'ī* (anglicized as *Shiite*) has often been used to designate all followers of 'Alī; but in a more restricted sense, its application is limited to the so-called Twelvers (Ithnā 'Asharīyah) of Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, and elsewhere, while *'Alawī* is taken to refer exclusively to the 'Alawī Nuṣayrīyah of northwestern Syria. The indigenous sources, past and present, do not make such clearcut distinctions, however. The other two leading Shī'ī sects, the Zaydīyah and the Ismā'īlīyah, have had significant historical and doctrinal differences with the mainstream Twelvers. Finally, there exists a group of extremist Shī'ī sects known collectively as the Ghulāt ("exaggerators"), to which the 'Alawī Nuṣayrīyah of Syria belong. While the Shī'ah in general hold 'Alī and his immediate family in high esteem, the Ghulāt have gone beyond veneration, often considering 'Alī a manifestation of the deity.

Origins. The majority of Muslims, called Sunnīs, accepted the early settlement on the succession (caliphate) to the Prophet's leadership, and their religious scholars (*'ulamā'*) subsequently arrived at a doctrinal position which states that "God's religion is the middle ground between exaggerated zeal [*ghulūw*] and negligence [*jafā'*]." It was left to the scholars to interpret God's word in the Qur'ān. The Shī'ah, on the other hand, would accept only the leadership of 'Alī as imam *par excellence*, and, to satisfy the need for someone who would be specially endowed to understand the esoteric (*bāṭinī*) meaning of God's injunctions, they elevated 'Alī to the position of *walī* of God: the "friend" of the Almighty and "custodian" of the faith. With time, the Shī'ī scholars developed an elaborate theological system which featured such concepts as *imāmah* (leadership of the Muslim community), *'iṣmah* (infallibility of the imam), *naṣṣ* (attested succession), *taqīyah* (religious dissimulation), and *ghaybah* (occultation). Thus the Sunnīs and the Shī'ah became two dimensions of the Islamic dispensation.

With the Ghulāt, the excessive veneration of 'Alī took a different turn long before the 'Alawī Nuṣayrīyah came on the scene. *Ghulūw* manifested itself in a long series

of extremist movements, the earliest of which was perhaps that of al-Mukhtār (AH 66, 685/6 CE), who claimed to be an incarnation of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyah, a son of 'Alī by a woman from the Ḥanīfah tribe. Toward the end of the ninth century, the Qarāmiṭah offered another example of religious and social extremism; the Ismā'īlī Shī'ī state of the Fatimids was founded on the ruins of this movement. A major phase of religious extremism appeared following the decline of Fatimid power in the eleventh century. This development coincided with the resurgence of Byzantine power south of the Taurus mountains along the traditional limes (thughūr, 'awāṣim) in the northern Syrian borderlands, the weakening position of the Shī'ī Hamdanids in Aleppo and the Buyids in Baghdad, and most of all, the influx of Crusader armies along the Syrian coastlands and their final occupation of Jerusalem in 1099.

This unsettled situation engendered three curious religious factions: the 'Alawīyūn proper in the northwest region of Syria, the Druze sect of southern geographic Syria, and the movement of Ḥasan-i Ṣabbāḥ (the socalled Assassins) who ultimately established themselves in such mountain strongholds as Alamūt and elsewhere. While the Druze and the Assassins were direct splinters from the Ismā'īlī Fatimids of Egypt, the 'Alawīyūn were grounded in Twelver thought with syncretic Christian accretions.

Historical Development. Almost every founder of a Shī'ī movement, including the Ghulāt sects, claimed some attachment to, or direct genealogical descent from, 'Alī or his immediate descendants, the twelve imams. The 'Alawī Nuṣayrīyah, though claiming no direct descent from any of the imams, believed that each of the twelve imams had a "gate" (bāb), beginning with Salmān al-Fārisī, who was the "gate" of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, and ending with Abū Shu'ayb Muḥammad ibn Nuṣayr, the "gate" to the eleventh imam, al-Ḥasan al-'Askarī (d. 874). The twelfth imam had no "gate"; however, Muḥammad ibn Nuṣayr continued to assume that position during the period of occultation. The 'Alawīyūn consider the office of the bāb one of their basic religious institutions, and since they claim Ibn Nuṣayr as their founder, they are sometimes known as the Nuṣayrīyah. Ibn Nuṣayr was succeeded by Muḥammad ibn Jundub, then by Muḥammad al-Jinān al-Junbulānī. It was at about this time that a certain Ḥusayn ibn Ḥamdān al-Khaṣībī, originally from Egypt, was attracted to northern Syria and became the ideological leader of the movement. He was active at the courts of the Hamdanids of Aleppo and the Buyids of Baghdad. The center for 'Alawī activity, however, moved to Latakia when these Twelver Shī'ī states succumbed to the Sunnī Seljuk Turks.

During the early Mongol period the 'Alawī community witnessed a short revival under Emir Ḥasan al-Makzūn al-Sinjārī, "one of the greatest and most pious shaykhs of the sect, who rescued 'Alawī authority, organized the affairs of the community, and provided his followers with a comfortable way of life" (Ṭawīl, pp. 309–310). Soon, however, the region fell under Mamluk domination. The Ḥanbalī scholar Aḥmad ibn Taymīyah (d. 1328) wrote a scathing refutation of the 'Alawī Nuṣayrīyah (Risālah fī al-radd 'alā al-Nuṣayrīyah) in which they are said to believe in the drinking of wine, the reincarnation of the soul, the antiquity of the world, and the fact that their god who created the heavens and the earth is 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, who to them is the imam in heaven and the imam on earth; and to claim that Muḥammad the prophet is only the "name" while 'Alī is the "meaning" and essence. Condemning the 'Alawīyūn along with other sects such as the Malāḥidah Assassins, the Qarāmiṭah, the Ismā'īlīyah, and all types of bāṭinī esoterics, Ibn Taymīyah accuses them of kufr ("unbelief") worse than that of the Jews and Christians, calls them mushrikūn ("polytheists"), and prohibits marriage with them, partaking of their food, or allowing them to guard the frontiers of Islam. The North African traveler Ibn Baṭṭūṭah (d. 1377), who passed through Nuṣayrī territory, observed that they believed in 'Alī as their god and that they did not pray, nor did they perform ablutions or observe the fast incumbent upon all Muslims. According to Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, who was a Mālikī jurist, they used the mosques, which the Mamluk rulers had forced them to build, as stables for their animals. At one time, he reports, the sultan had ordered their extermination but was reminded by his chief minister that the Nuṣayrīyah were still needed to till the land.

In the sixteenth century, the Ottomans under Sultan Selim fought Shiism on all fronts: against a large-scale Shī'ī rebellion in Anatolia, against the Safavids of Iran, and against the 'Alawīyūn of Syria. Once victory was attained, however, the issue was allowed to fade, and during the next four centuries the 'Alawī communities suffered the benign neglect of Ottoman rule. They were not treated as a millet (autonomous religious community), and their affairs were left in the hands of their tribal chieftains. Midhat Pasha, the nineteenth-century reform-minded governor of Syria, attempted to institute a separate administration (liwā') for the 'Alawīyūn. Under the French Mandate after the First World War, they were treated as an "independent" state within Syria and were referred to as the "Alaouites" for the first time. The French drafted many of their young men for what came to be called the Troupes Spéciales du Levant. This special status survived into the late twentieth century with an 'Alawī circle dominating the Syr-

ian military government, led by President Ḥāfiẓ al-Asad, himself an 'Alawī.

Relation to Shiism. Inasmuch as the 'Alawī Nuṣayrī-yah profess allegiance to 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, they share many of their beliefs and practices with the rest of the Shī'ah. Within Shiism, however, two traditions have survived: a high Islam, "orthodox," scribal tradition which has been preserved in the writings of the three main Shī'ī groups, the Twelvers, the Ismā'īlī Seveners, and the Zaydīyah, and a folk Islam, "popular," nonscribal, secretive tradition which is the hallmark of the Ghulāt. The 'Alawī Nuṣayrīyah of northwestern Syria belong to the latter tradition. The idea of the *bāb* as the "gate" to the imam appears to have been an attempt to preserve Twelver continuity, which the mainstream Shī'ī scholars resolved through the concept of occultation. In any case, the Shī'ī 'Alawīyūn had no chance to further develop high Islam ideas since their patrons in Aleppo and Baghdad (the Twelver Hamdanids and Buyids respectively) had just lost their power to the ardent Sunnī Seljuks, and the 'Alawīyūn were left essentially on their own.

At exactly the same time, moreover, the 'Alawī lands were invaded by the Christian knights of the Crusader armies. Hence, in addition to their original extremist views about 'Alī and the imams, the 'Alawīyūn inherited Christian elements which they incorporated into their folk Islam beliefs (although the Islamic core remained predominant). Ideas of a trinity (a concept abhorred in official Islam) became current, with 'Alī as the *ma'nā* (esoteric meaning and essence), Muḥammad as the *ism* (outward exoteric name), and Salmān al-Fārisī as the *bāb* (gate to 'Alī's esoteric essence). Joined together, the three appear in a profession *(shahādah)* of the faith: I testify that there is no god but 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib *al-ma'būd* ("the worshiped one"), no veil *(ḥijāb)* but Muḥammad *al-maḥmūd* ("the praised one"), and no gate but Salmān al-Fārisī *al-maqṣūd* ("the intended one"). In addition to the traditional Sunnī and Shī'ī holidays, Christian feast days such as Christmas, Epiphany, and Pentecost are celebrated. There are also several mass-type ceremonies, such as the incense mass and the *adhān* mass (for the Muslim call to prayer), during which the congregation chants hymns said to have been composed by one of the early fathers, al-Khaṣībī, although the Arabic language of the original indicates a more popular folk-literary hand. Belief in reincarnation is widespread: Muslims returning as donkeys, Christians as pigs, Jews as monkeys. This syncretic mixture of ideas has led one French authority on the 'Alawīyūn to describe their beliefs as "a deformation of Christianity or a survival of ancient paganism" (Weulersse, 1946;

p. 271). Another work, based substantially on polemical material, seems to be in partial agreement: "From an Islamic standpoint, the religious beliefs and practices of the Nuṣairīs set them off as a distinct religion, neither Islamic nor Christian nor Jewish, and it has always been the consensus of the Muslim *'ulamā'*, both Sunnī and Shī'ī, that the Nuṣairīs are *kuffār* (disbelievers, rejectors of the faith) and idolaters *(mushrikūn)*" (Abd-Allah, p. 48).

Contemporary Importance. The importance of the 'Alawī Nuṣayrī community in the late twentieth century derives largely from the widespread contemporary revival of Islam. Their numbers have always been small: 300,000 according to Ghālib al-Ṭawīl in the 1920s; 225,000 according to Weulersse in 1943–1944; 325,311 according to Hourani in 1946; 600,000 or 700,000 according to Petran in 1972; and at most a "million or so" according to Batatu in 1981 (the last figure probably includes 'Alawīs throughout the world). In the "independent" Alaouite state under French administration, the Representative Council of 1930, for example, included ten 'Alawī members, two Orthodox Christians, one Maronite Christian, three Sunnīs, and one Ismā'īlī. In more recent times, 'Alawī leaders, both religious and secular, have been making outward attempts to gain acceptance among the rest of the (largely Sunnī) population of Syria. In 1973, for example, an official statement was issued by as many as eighty 'Alawī religious leaders proclaiming the adherence of the community to the teachings and legal practices of Twelver Shiism and adding that "whatever else is attributed to them has no basis in truth and is a mere invention by their enemies and the enemies of Islam" (Batatu, p. 335). Mūsā al-Ṣadr, a politico-religious leader of Labanon's Twelver Shī'ī community and founder of the Amal movement in the 1970s, included a number of representatives of the Lebanese 'Alawī community in his Shī'ī Council, while a recent booklet, *Al-'Alawīyūn shī'at ahl al-bayt* (a title that identifies the 'Alawīyūn with the "party of the house of the Prophet," namely, 'Alī and the imams), indicates a rapprochement of the community with the mainstream Twelvers. (A preface to this publication, written by a Twelver scholar, Ḥasan Mahdī Shīrāzī, avers that "the words *'Alawī* and *Shī'ah* are interchangeable.") Developments such as these may suggest a shift in 'Alawī orientation from the Ghulāt to "orthodox" Twelver Shiism.

[*See also* Assassins; Druze; *and* Taqīyah.]

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ĀLAYA-VIJÑĀNA. The Sanskrit term *ālaya-vijñāna*, which literally means "receptacle consciousness," corresponds roughly to the Western notion of the subconscious. Early Buddhism held that sentient beings were made up of five "aggregates" (*skandhas*): matter *(rūpa)*, sensation *(vedanā)*, perception *(samjñā)*, volition *(samskāra)*, and consciousness *(vijñāna)*. Consciousness, in turn, was subdivided into six types: visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, and discriminative *(mano-vijñāna)*. The five aggregates were regarded as impermanent and interdependent, each arising in relation to the others and enduring for only a single moment. Consciousness, for example, was not viewed as an ongoing, permanent mental function but rather was seen as a series of consciousness "flashes," each conditioned by the preceding moment's consciousness as well as by the other aggregates.

The notion that sentient beings consist of five aggregates and nothing more was used to prove that there is no such entity as a permanent, unchanging self *(ātman)*, the reality of which had been a major theme of the Upanisadic literature. The acceptance by Buddhists of the idea that one's actions *(karman)* in this life determine the conditions of rebirth in the next life, however, presented the scholar-monks with a predicament: if the five aggregates are all that there is to the sentient being, and if these five are impermanent, appearing and disappearing with each passing moment, where in the mind or body of the sentient being are the good or evil effects of actions stored?

By the fourth century CE Mahāyānists associated with the Yogācāra school had developed the concept of the *ālaya-vijñāna*, which they understood to be that part of the consciousness that functions as a receptacle for the energy, technically termed "seeds" *(bīja*s), generated by one's good or evil actions. Like the other types of consciousness, the *ālaya* is impermanent, reproducing itself, as do the seeds that comprise it, from one moment to the next. It differs from the other six types of consciousness, which are readily discernible, in that it is fully cognizable only to Buddhas; unenlightened beings are unaware of this subconscious level of mind.

The term *ālaya-vijñāna* first occurs in the *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra* (Sutra on the Explanation of the Profound Mysteries), which serves as the basic scripture of the Yogācāra school. Various conflicting interpretations regarding the precise nature and function of the *ālaya-vijñāna* arose among the Indian Yogācāra masters of the sixth and seventh centuries. The most influential of these, at least for Buddhists in East Asia (the Indian materials were largely lost), was the interpretation made by the Indian monk Dharmapāla (530–561),

whose ideas and writings were transmitted to China by the celebrated translator Hsüan-tsang (602–664). Here they were further developed by the latter's disciple Chi (also known as K'uei-chi) and evolved into the doctrinal system subsequently called Fa-hsiang (Jpn., Hossō). [*See the biographies of Dharmapāla, Hsüan-tsang, and K'uei-chi.*]

The Fa-hsiang tradition holds that there are eight types of consciousness, the first six being identical with those spoken of in early Buddhism. The *ālaya*, which in the Fa-hsiang system is always counted as the eighth type of consciousness, receives the effects of all good and evil acts, whether physical, verbal, or mental, and stores them as "seeds." When the appropriate conditions are in place, these seeds, as the word implies, produce their own effects, which are manifested as the unique psychological and physical makeup of each being. The realm and conditions of rebirth are likewise determined by the mixture of seeds stored in the *ālaya-vijñāna*.

The seventh type of consciousness, called *mo-na-shih* in Chinese, resembles the *ālaya-vijñāna* in that unenlightened beings are unaware of its existence. It is that part of the mind that is turned inward, mistaking the *ālaya* for a real self *(ātman)*, to which image it tenaciously clings. The *mo-na-shih* by its very nature fails to comprehend that the *ālaya* essentially has no existence apart from the seeds (effects of acts) that it holds. From this misapprehension derives the erroneous belief that each being has a unique self of its own, a view that, in Buddhist terms, is the ultimate cause of suffering. Deliverance, according to the Fa-hsiang system, is realized only when one grasps the true nature of the *ālaya-vijñāna* and its relationship to the other types of consciousness.

[*See also* Vijñāna; Soul, *article on* Buddhist Concepts; Yogācāra; Tathāgata-garbha; *and* Soteriology, *article on* Buddhist Soteriology.]

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STANLEY WEINSTEIN

ALBANIAN RELIGION. The Albanian people are essentially the descendents of the ancient Illyrians, and this fact remains important for an understanding of their religious practices even today. The Albanians were christianized in the fourth and fifth centuries, becoming Catholic in the north and Orthodox in the south. After the seventeenth century, however, many embraced Islam. More recently, Albania has been officially secularized under its Communist government. Nevertheless, throughout all these changes, an ancient substratum of pre-Christian beliefs has survived among Albanians, merging with what Mircea Eliade has called the "cosmic Christianity" typical of Balkan peoples.

Archaic Beliefs. This ancient substratum surfaces in some key religious terms. The supreme being, for instance, whether in popular or Christian belief, is called by the name of the old Indo-European thunder god, *Perëndi* (cf. Sanskrit *Parjanya*, Lithuanian *Perkūnas*, Slavic *Perun*, Thracian *Perkos*). The name of an old Illyrian god, *Hen* or *En*, may be preserved in the Albanian word for "Thursday," *Henetë* (cf. Latin *Iovis dies*).

The archaic component in Albanian religion also becomes apparent in a number of popular beliefs and practices. Some of these focus on the earth, which is the object of a special cult and of important oaths. A cosmogonic legend recounts how the earth was carried away by a bull, whose shaking is believed to be the cause of earthquakes. Traces of a chthonic divinity like Magna Mater seem to have been preserved in the cult of the maternal breasts. Numerous feminine statuettes are found, representing the evil spirit Kulshedra, with great breasts extending down to the earth. Breasts are depicted on gates in stone or wood as a symbol of fertility. One of the most important oaths among Albanians is "on my mother's breasts," and a taboo forbids the hitting of the earth, since this would amount to hitting a dead mother's breasts. In northern Albania, when a woman with numerous children dies, her relatives are required to kiss her naked breasts.

This cult of the earth goddess probably provides the correct context for the well-known Balkan legend according to which the construction of a monastery or a bridge could be completed only after the sacrifice of the chief architect's wife. The story is documented among

Albanians in the legend of Shkodër, Berat, and Dibër strongholds. The unfortunate woman who is immured in the edifice asks to have one of her breasts left free so that she can nurse her son. Lime water flowing from the walls is looked upon as her milk and is used as medicine for nursing women.

Birth, marriage, and death rites also seem to be of autochthonous origin. Burial rites reveal a strong belief in a life after death that is not much different from the present life (paradise, hell, and the devil being strictly Christian ideas). A man preserves his appearance after death and as a shadow *(hie)* haunts the places familiar to him from his earthly life. After death souls remain intimately associated with the family and usually preside over the family hearth. The soul of a forefather becomes a divinity, protective of the whole family, and receives offerings. Blood sacrifices were not only tolerated but were sometimes offered by a Christian priest, either at the grave or even in a church. Only in the historical period was the human sacrifice practiced in conjunction with building rites replaced by animal sacrifices.

The continuity of life between the two worlds and the continuity of the tribe from generation to generation is sustained by the fire of the domestic hearth, the name of which, *vatrë*, is related to the Avestan *ātash* ("fire") and to the Sanskrit *atharvan* ("priest of the fire"). Also related to the hearth is the *nëna (ëma* or *mëma) e vatrës*, the "mother of the hearth," a beneficent deity akin to Hestia and Vesta, the Greek and Roman goddesses of the hearth. In the domestic sphere one also finds the cult of the "serpent of the house" *(gjarpni i shtëpisë*, or *bolla e shtëpisë)*, which is another guardian spirit, attested in the Balkans since antiquity. The death of this "serpent of the house" means the extinction of the family.

The cycle of annual rites related to the cosmic cycle and to the rhythms of agricultural and pastoral life are also well attested in Albania. The cult of the sun *(djell*, masculine), and the cult of the moon *(henë*, the wife of the sun), perhaps of Illyrian origin, are well documented in Albanian legends, folk art, and oaths.

Customs of pagan origin are also evident in the Christian feasts and in the stories of the saints. Thus Christmas coincides with the celebration of the winter solstice, and is called Natë e Buzmit ("night of the log"), a reference to the log that is in fact burned in the hearth throughout this night. Although Christ himself rarely appears in the legends, the figures of Saint Elias, Saint George, and Saint Nicholas clearly exhibit non-Christian features. The syncretism at work in Albanian religion is well illustrated, from a somewhat different an-

gle, by the fact that Christian saints sometimes greet one another by saying "Allāh be with you!"

Greek and Latin Sources and Parallels. A number of Albanian mythological figures can be traced back to Greece; some even have names derived from their Greek originals. Thus the Albanian *mira* (cf. Albanian *mirë*, "good") derive from the Greek Moirai, the Fates; Talas, the Albanian god of the sea tempest, perhaps got his name from the Greek word *thalassa* ("sea"); the fairy Mauthia is the old Greek nymph Amaltheia; the Kulshedra, an evil spirit, portrayed as a giant hairy old woman or as a dragon, corresponds to the Greek Hydra. The three-headed dog of Hades, Kerberos, appears in Albanian tales as the guardian of the "beauty of the earth" *(bakura e dheut)*. The Albanian *ore*, good feminine spirits who, like the *parcae*, can foretell a child's future at birth, are perhaps connected with the Greek Horai. The Greek *oreadai* are known in Albania as "the brides (or nymphs) of the mountain" *(nuset i malit)*. Finally, the Cyclops can be recognized in the giant one-eyed anthropophagus Katallâ.

One can also find a great number of Roman parallels, with names that suggest a Latin source. Zâna ("fairy," Albanian and Romanian), a good spirit who aids the hero in fairy tales, may derive her name from the Roman Diana, although she is also connected with an important autochthonous goddess of the Balkans, the Thracian Bendis. *Fat* ("fate"), which can be both good and bad by turns, derives its name from the Latin *fatum*. The Albanian *shtrigë* ("witch") is the Latin *striga* (cf. Romanian *strigoi*, "ghost"), and the *drangue*, a winged hero whose goal is to kill the Kulshedra, derives its name from the Latin *draco*. The cult of such heroes is very popular among Albanians. The Latin language has also supplied Albania with most of its fundamental Christian terminology.

There is a further stratum of religious beliefs in Albania, of uncertain origin and meaning, which may be considered as a general Balkan contribution. Here one finds superstitions and beliefs in spirits that are classified according to a clearly dualistic demonology, based on the antinomy of good and evil. Beliefs in vampires *(dhampir)* and werewolves *(vurkollak, vurvolak)* or in other evil forces, like the *lubija*, originate with the Slavs. Spirits such as the *xhind (xhinn)* or "jinn" and the Harap or "Moor" are evidently of Turkish origin. Others such as the *bardhat*, the "white ones," the *avullushe*, evil spirits, and the *baloz*, an evil hero, have Albanian names. Here one also finds a whole series of witches, wind spirits, dwarfs, and giants. In this context one must also mention the very old Balkan and Oriental idea of the "evil eye" *(syni i ket)*. The Albanians protect

themselves against this assortment of malevolent forces by the use of magic formulas *(yshtje)* and various amulets. These are sometimes prepared by Christian priests or Muslim mullahs, who have been known to refer their problem clients to one another.

[*See also* Indo-European Religions.]

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CICERONE POGHIRC

ALBERTUS MAGNUS (c. 1200–1280), also known as Albert the Great; German Dominican theologian and philosopher, doctor of the church, patron of natural scientists, and Christian saint. Today he is best known as the teacher of Thomas Aquinas.

Born in Lauingen on the Danube in Bavaria, Albert belonged to a distinguished military family in the service of the Hohenstaufens. While a student at Padua, he entered the mendicant Order of Preachers (Dominicans) in spring 1223, receiving the religious habit from Jordan of Saxony, successor to Dominic. Assigned to Cologne, he completed his early theological studies in 1228, then taught at Cologne, Hildesheim, Freiburg, Regensburg, and Strassburg. Around 1241 he was sent by the master general to the University of Paris for his degree in theology, which he obtained in the summer of 1245, having lectured on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard and

begun writing his *Summa parisiensis* in six parts: the sacraments, the incarnation, the resurrection, the four coevals, man, and good. In 1248 Albert returned to Cologne with Thomas Aquinas and a group of Dominican students to open a center of studies for Germany.

Toward the end of 1249, Albert acceded to the pleas of his students to explain Aristotle's philosophy. His intention was, first, to present the whole of natural science, even parts that Aristotle did not write about or that had been lost, and, second, to make all the books of Aristotle "intelligible to the Latins" by rephrasing arguments, adding new ones from his own experience, and resolving new difficulties encountered by other schools of philosophy, notably the Platonist and Epicurean schools.

From 1252 until 1279 Albert was frequently called upon to arbitrate difficult litigations on behalf of the pope or emperor. In June 1254 he was elected prior provincial of the German province of the Dominican order for three years. The most important event during Albert's term of office was the struggle for survival between the mendicant orders and the secular clergy from the University of Paris. With Bonaventure and Humbert of Romans in 1256, he represented the mendicant orders at the papal curia at Anagni against William of Saint-Amour and his colleagues from Paris. The controversy was resolved in favor of the mendicants and the condemnation of William's book on 5 October 1256. Also during Albert's term as provincial he wrote his paraphrases of Aristotle's *On the Soul* (Albert considered this paraphrase one of his most important), *On Natural Phenomena*, and *On Plants*.

Resigning as provincial in June 1257, Albert returned to teaching in Cologne, but he was appointed bishop of Regensburg by Pope Alexander IV on 5 January 1260, much against his inclinations. He was at the episcopal castle on the Danube when he wrote his commentary on book 7 of *On Animals*, but in December he set out for the papal curia at Viterbo to submit his resignation. The new pope, Urban IV, accepted his resignation around November 1261, and a successor was confirmed in May 1262. From February 1263 to October 1264 he was the official papal preacher throughout German-speaking lands for a crusade to the Holy Land. With the death of Urban IV, Albert's commission ended, and he retired to Würzburg, where he worked on paraphrases of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and other works until 1269, when Master General John of Vercelli asked him to reside at the *studium* in Cologne as lector emeritus. From then until his death, Albert lived at Cologne, writing, performing para-episcopal duties, arbitrating difficult cases, and serving as an example of religious piety to all. His last will, dated January 1279, testified that he

was "of sound mind and body," but from August on he seems to have become progressively senile until his death on 15 November 1280 at the age of "eighty and some."

Doctrine and Influence. In recent centuries Albert has been presented as a magician or an eclectic encyclopedist with Platonic and mystical tendencies. His writings are said to defy analysis, not only because of their gigantic bulk but also because of their nature in most cases as paraphrases of mainly Aristotle's writings. Although Albert was a bishop who wrote many theological works and biblical commentaries, he was known in his own day principally as a philosopher, and his authority ranked with that of Aristotle, Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), and Ibn Rushd (Averroës). Roger Bacon, a younger Franciscan contemporary, complained that such pretensions were unbecoming to anyone who was still living and in fact self-taught. But it was precisely to obviate such suspicions that Albert disavowed originality in his writings by referring readers back to original sources by name, to experience, and to human reason.

Albert was the only Scholastic to be called "the Great," a title that was used even before his death. His prestige continued to be recognized not only among Albertists in France and Germany in the fifteenth century, but also among philosophers of the Italian Renaissance in the sixteenth century. Among his immediate students, apart from Thomas and Ulrich, were Hugh of Strassburg, John of Freiburg, John of Lichtenburg, and Giles of Lessines. Other German Dominicans, more favorably disposed toward Platonism, developed the mystical elements in Albert's thought. These were transmitted through Theodoric of Freiberg and Berthold of Mossburg to Meister Eckhart, Johannes Tauler, Heinrich Süse, and Jan van Ruusbroec. In the early fifteenth century a distinctive school of Albertists (who opposed the Thomists) developed in Paris under Jean de Maisonneuve and was promoted by Heymerich van den Velde in Paris and Cologne. It quickly spread throughout German, Bohemian, and Polish universities; in Italian universities, however, it was the philosophical opinions of Albert himself that were kept alive.

Numerous miracles were attributed to Albert, and many spurious works—devotional, necromantic, and Scholastic—were ascribed to him. Late in the fifteenth century his cause for canonization was well advanced until charges of sorcery and magic were raised; to refute these, Peter of Prussia wrote the first really critical biography of Albert (about 1487). The Protestant Reformation in the early sixteenth century temporarily diverted interest in Albert. He was quietly beatified by Gregory XV in 1622.

His extensive writings, occupying more than forty volumes in the critical edition (Cologne, 1951ff.), touch the whole of theology and scripture, as well as almost every branch of human knowledge in the Middle Ages, such as logic, natural science, mathematics, astronomy, ethics, and metaphysics. Ulrich of Strassburg, a Dominican disciple, described him as "a man so superior in every science that he can fittingly be called the wonder and miracle of our time." Siger of Brabant, a young contemporary of Thomas Aquinas at Paris, considered Albert and Thomas to be "the principal men in philosophy."

Albert is best known for his belief in (1) the importance of philosophy for theology and (2) the autonomy of each science in its own field by reason of proper principles and method. He paraphrased the whole of Aristotle's philosophy for beginners in theology (1249–1270); he taught and promoted philosophy in his own school of theology (1248–1260); and he chaired the Dominican commission of five masters established to draw up the first program of study in the order that made the study of philosophy mandatory (1259). He never tired of promoting secular learning for the clergy and denouncing lazy friars who did no more than criticize others. As for his view of the sciences, he defended the ability of human reason to know natural truths distinct from revelation and divine faith; he promoted and cultivated the study of the natural sciences distinct from metaphysics; and he considered mathematics an autonomous field that was simply a tool for natural science, not its organizing principle, as it was for the Platonists. In philosophy Albert was a moderate realist and fundamentally an Aristotelian, but he did not hesitate to reject certain statements when he thought Aristotle was in error, nor was he averse to incorporating into his Aristotelianism compatible truths expounded by others.

By the decree *In thesauris sapientiae* (15 December 1931), Pius XI declared Albert a saint with the additional title of doctor. By the decree *Ad Deum* (16 December 1941), Pius XII constituted him the heavenly patron of all who cultivate the natural sciences. His body is buried in Cologne, and his feast is observed on 15 November.

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JAMES A. WEISHEIPL

ALBIGENSIANS. *See* Cathari.

ALBO, YOSEF

ALBO, YOSEF (fl. fifteenth century), Spanish Jewish philosopher. Albo was a student of the last major medieval Jewish philosopher, Ḥasdai Crescas (1340–1410), and a defender of Judaism in the Disputation of Tortosa (1413–1414). He is known for his *Sefer ha-'iqqarim* (The Book of Principles), which owes its popularity to an easy style (with multiple homiletical digressions) and a moderately conservative theological stance.

As its name indicates, *Sefer ha-'iqqarim* deals with dogmatics, a common theme in fifteenth-century Jewish thought. Albo took issue with Moses Maimonides (1135/8–1204), who had proposed thirteen principles of faith, and with Crescas, who had listed six. Apparently borrowing from his contemporary Shim'on ben Tsemaḥ Duran (1361–1444), Albo reduced the principles of any divine religion to three: the existence of God, divine revelation, and reward and punishment. These major principles entail eight further derivative principles. The existence of God implies belief in his unity, incorporeality, independence of time, and freedom from defects. Revelation includes the principles of God's knowledge, prophecy, and the authenticity of God's messenger. Reward and punishment entail belief in individual provi-

dence. Thus, in reality, there are eleven principles of divine religion. In addition, Judaism teaches six specific articles of faith: creation *ex nihilo*, the superiority of Moses to other prophets, the continued validity of the Torah of Moses, the attainment of human perfection by the observance of even one of the commandments, resurrection, and the coming of the Messiah. An examination of the nature of these principles and beliefs forms the bulk of *Sefer ha-'iqqarim*.

Albo's work is best understood against the background of the physical and spiritual crisis of fifteenth-century Spanish Jewry. There were many Jews at that time who felt that no religion was rationally superior to another, and that loyalty to Judaism was therefore a superfluous encumbrance. Addressing himself to this attitude, Albo sets out to show that Judaism is preferable to Christianity. While reason cannot prove the truth of Judaism, it can demonstrate the falseness of Christianity; by examining the criteria that reason demands of any religion claiming to be divine, Albo attempts to demonstrate that Christianity falls short of the mark (especially in regard to God's unity and incorporeality) and hence cannot be considered a divine religion. In addition, Christians are required to hold beliefs that are logically impossible and, therefore, false. At most, Albo claims, Christianity is a conventional religion, one that promotes societal well-being but not individual immortality. Judaism, on the other hand, fits the requirements of a divine religion exactly, in that it adheres to the three principles as he has defined them. In addition, it includes no beliefs that are contrary to logic. Loyalty to Judaism is thus the reasonable course of action for the wavering Jew. Over and over, Albo subtly polemicizes against the majority religion and then, for good measure, devotes a lengthy chapter to a specific rebuttal of Christianity (which, despite its form, is not an account of an actual disputation).

In addition to its polemical value, Albo's work provides a *summa* of medieval Jewish philosophy, discussing all the major philosophical and theological issues that had been raised in the previous five hundred years. Albo was not a doctrinaire member of any particular philosophical school; he took liberally from his predecessors without fully adopting the system of any of them. On most questions Albo tends toward eclecticism and compromise. For instance, he first agrees with Maimonides that only active and negative attributes can be assigned to God, but then he switches to Crescas's view that there are some essential attributes also. Prophecy is totally dependent upon God's will (the traditional view), but the prophet must have the requisite rational faculties in order to prophesy (the philosophical view). Human perfection consists of the realization of intellec-

tual potential (the philosophical view), but immortality depends on doing God's will as outlined in the Torah (the traditional view).

Albo's *Sefer ha-'iqqarim* has been published often and has maintained its popularity in traditional Jewish circles to this day.

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ALCHEMY. [*To explore the common ground of alchemy and religion, this entry consists of six articles:*

The introductory article explains the essentially spiritual nature of the alchemist's quest; the following articles survey the origins and history of alchemy in various cultures where the practice has flourished.]

An Overview

The vocable *alchemia* (or some alternate form such as *ars chemica*) appears in the West from the twelfth century onward in reference to the medieval quest for a means of transmuting base metals into gold, for a universal cure, and for the "elixir of immortality." The origin of the root *chem* is not yet satisfactorily explained. In Chinese, Indian, and Greek texts alchemy is referred to as "the Art," or by terms indicating radical and beneficial change, for example, *transmutation*. Until quite recently, historians of science have studied alchemy as a protochemistry, that is, an embryonic science. Indeed, like the early chemist, the practitioner of "the Art" made use of a laboratory and of certain specific instruments; more important, alchemists were the authors of a number of discoveries that later played roles in the

development of the science of chemistry. To quote only a few examples: the isolation of mercury around 300 BCE; the discovery of *aqua vitae* (alcohol) and of the mineral acids, both before the thirteenth century; the preparation of vitriol and the alums.

But the methods, the ideology, and the goals of the early chemists did not prolong the alchemical heritage. The alchemists were not interested—or only subsidiarily—in the scientific study of nature. Where the early Greek mind applies itself to science it evinces an extraordinary sense of observation and argument. Yet the Greek alchemists show an inexplicable lack of interest in the physico-chemical phenomena of their work. To cite a single example, no one who has ever used sulfur could fail to observe "the curious phenomena which attend its fusion and the subsequent heating of the liquid. Now, while sulphur is mentioned hundreds of times [in Greek alchemical texts], there is no allusion to any of its characteristic properties except its action on metals" (Sherwood Taylor, quoted in Eliade, 1978, p. 147). As we shall see presently, the alchemist's quest was not scientific but spiritual.

Esoteric Traditions and the Importance of Secrecy. In every culture where alchemy has flourished, it has always been intimately related to an esoteric or "mystical" tradition: in China to Taoism, in India to Yoga and Tantrism, in Hellenistic Egypt to *gnōsis*, in Islamic countries to Hermetic and esoteric mystical schools, in the Western Middle Ages and Renaissance to Hermeticism, Christian and sectarian mysticism, and Qabbalah. In brief, all alchemists have proclaimed their art to be an esoteric technique pursuing a goal similar or comparable to that of the major esoteric and "mystical" traditions.

For this reason, great emphasis is placed by the alchemist on secrecy, that is, the esoteric transmission of alchemical doctrines and techniques. The oldest Hellenistic text, *Physikē kai mystikē* (probably written around 200 BCE), relates how this book was discovered hidden in a column of an Egyptian temple. In the prologue to one of the classical Indian alchemical treatises, *Rasārnava*, the Goddess asks Śiva for the secret of becoming a *jīvanmuleta*, that is, one "liberated in life." Śiva tells her that this secret is seldom known, even among the gods. Again, the importance of secrecy is emphasized by the most famous Chinese alchemist, Ko Hung (260–340 CE), who stated that "secrecy is thrown over the efficacious recipes. . . . The substances referred to are commonplaces which nevertheless cannot be identified without knowledge of the code concerned" (*Pao-p'ru–tzu*, chap. 16). The deliberate incomprehensibility of alchemical texts for the noninitiate becomes almost a cliché in Western post-Renaissance alchemical litera-

ture. An author quoted by the fifteenth-century *Rosarium philosophorum* declares that "only he who knows how to make the Philosophers' Stone understands the words which relate to it." And the *Rosarium* warns the reader that these questions must be transmitted "mystically," just as poetry uses fables and parables. In short, we are confronted with a secret language. According to some authorities, there was even an oath not to divulge the secret in books (texts quoted in Eliade, 1978, p. 164).

The stages of the alchemical opus constitute an initiation, a series of specific experiences aimed at the radical transformation of the human condition. But the successful initiate cannot adequately express his new mode of being in a profane language. He is compelled to use a "secret language." Of course, secrecy was a general rule with almost all techniques and sciences in their early stages—from pottery, mining, and metallurgy to medicine and mathematics. The secret transmission of methods, tools, and recipes is abundantly documented in China and in India, as well as in the ancient Near East and Greece. Even so late an author as Galen warns one of his disciples that the medical knowledge that he communicates must be received as an aspirant receives the *teletē* (initiation) in the Eleusinian mysteries. As a matter of fact, being introduced into the secrets of a craft, of a technique, or of a science was tantamount to undergoing an initiation.

It is significant that the injunction to secrecy and occultation is *not* abolished by the successful accomplishment of the alchemical work. According to Ko Hung, the adepts who obtain the elixir and become "immortals" *(hsien)* continue to wander on earth, but they conceal their condition, that is, their immortality, and are recognized as such only by a few fellow alchemists. Likewise, in India there is a vast literature, both in Sanskrit and in the vernaculars, in relation to certain famous *siddhi*s, yogin-alchemists who live for centuries but who seldom disclose their identity. One encounters the same belief in central and western Europe: certain Hermetists and alchemists (such as Nicolas Flamel and his wife, Pernelle) were reputed to have lived indefinitely without being recognized by their contemporaries. In the seventeenth century a similar legend circulated about the Rosicrucians and, in the following century, on a more popular level, in relation to the mysterious Comte de Saint-Germain.

Origins of Alchemy. The objects of the alchemical quest—namely, health and longevity, transmutation of base metals into gold, production of the elixir of immortality—have a long prehistory in the East as well as in the West. [*See* Elixir.] Significantly, this prehistory reveals a specific mythico-religious structure. Innumer-

able myths, for instance, tell of a spring, a tree, a plant, or some other substance capable of bestowing longevity, rejuvenation, or even immortality. Now, in all alchemical traditions, but particularly in Chinese alchemy, specific plants and fruits play an important role in the art of prolonging life and recovering perennial youth.

But the central aim of the alchemist was the transformation of ordinary metals into gold. This "noble" metal was imbued with sacrality. According to the Egyptians, the flesh of gods and of pharaohs was made of gold. In ancient India, a text from the eighth century BCE (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 3.8.2.27) proclaims that "gold is immortality." Interpreting alchemy as a mere technique for "turning base metals into precious ones," that is, for *imitating* gold, H. H. Dubs has suggested that the technique originated during the fourth century BCE in China, where the test for gold (which had been practiced in Mesopotamia since the fourteenth century BCE) was unknown. This hypothesis has been rejected, however, by most scholars. According to Nathan Sivin, the belief in physical immortality is documented in China by the eighth century BCE, but not until the fourth century was immortality considered attainable through the use of drugs and other techniques, and "the transformation of cinnabar into gold is not spoken of as possible, according to extant sources, before 133 B.C." (Sivin, 1968, p. 25).

Mining, Metallurgy, and Alchemy. Even if the historical beginnings of alchemy are as yet obscure, parallels between certain alchemical beliefs and rituals and those of early miners and metallurgists are clear. [*See* Metals and Metallurgy.] Indeed, all these techniques reflect the idea that man can influence the temporal flux. Mineral substances, hidden in the womb of Mother Earth, shared in the sacredness attached to the goddess. Very early we are confronted with the idea that ores "grow" in the belly of the earth after the manner of embryos. Metallurgy thus takes on the character of obstetrics. The miner and metalworker intervene in the unfolding of subterranean embryology: they accelerate the rhythm of the growth of ores; they collaborate in the work of nature and assist it in giving birth more rapidly. In a word, man, with his various techniques, gradually takes the place of time: his labors replace the work of time.

With the help of fire, metalworkers transform the ores (the "embryos") into metals (the "adults"). The underlying belief is that, given enough time, the ores would have become "pure" metals in the womb of Mother Earth. Further, the "pure" metals would have become gold if they had been allowed to "grow" undisturbed for a few more thousand years. Such beliefs are well known

in many traditional societies. As early as the second century BCE, Chinese alchemists declared that the "baser" minerals develop after many years into "nobler" minerals, and finally become silver or gold. Similar beliefs are shared by a number of Southeast Asian populations. For instance, the Annamites were convinced that the gold found in mines is formed slowly *in situ* over the course of centuries, and that if one had probed the earth long ago, one would have discovered bronze in the place where gold is found today.

These beliefs survived in western Europe until the industrial revolution. In the seventeenth century one Western alchemist wrote:

> If there were no exterior obstacles to the execution of her designs, Nature would always complete what she wishes to produce. . . . That is why we have to look upon the birth of imperfect metals as we would on abortions and freaks which come about only because Nature has been, as it were, misdirected or because she has encountered some fettering resistance or certain obstacles which prevent her from behaving in her accustomed way. . . . Hence although she wishes to produce only one metal, she finds herself constrained to create several. Gold and only gold is the child of her desires. Gold is her legitimate son because only gold is a genuine production of her efforts.   (quoted in Eliade, 1978, p. 50)

The Alchemist Completes the Work of Nature. The transmutation of base metals into gold is tantamount to a miraculously rapid maturation. As Simone da Colonia put it: "This Art teaches us to make a remedy called the Elixir, which, being poured on imperfect metals, perfects them completely, and it is for this reason that it was invented" (quoted in Eliade, 1978, p. 166). The same idea is clearly expounded by Ben Jonson in his play *The Alchemist* (1610). One character says that "lead and other metals . . . would be gold if they had time," and another adds, "And that our Art doth further."

Moreover, the elixir is said to be capable of accelerating the temporal rhythm of all organisms and thus of quickening their growth. In a text erroneously attributed to Ramón Lull, one can read that "in Spring, by its great and marvelous heat, the Stone brings life to the plants: if thou dissolve the equivalent of a grain of salt in water, taking from this water enough to fill a nutshell, and then if thou water with it a vinestock, thy vinestock will bring forth ripe grapes in May" (quoted in Ganzenmüller, 1940, p. 159). Furthermore, Chinese as well as Islamic and Western alchemists exalted the elixir for its universal therapeutic virtues: it was said to cure all maladies, to restore youth to the old, and to prolong life by several centuries.

Alchemy and Mastery of Time. Thus it seems that the central secret of "the Art" is related to the alchemist's mastery of cosmic and human time. The early miners and metallurgists thought that, with the help of fire, they could speed up the growth of ores. The alchemists were more ambitious: they thought they could "heal" base metals and accelerate their "maturation," thereby transmuting them into nobler metals and finally into gold. But the alchemists went even further: their elixir was reputed to heal and to rejuvenate men as well, indefinitely prolonging their lives. In the alchemist's eyes, man is *creative:* he redeems nature, masters time; in sum, he perfects God's creation. The myth of alchemy is an optimistic myth; it constitutes, as it were, a "natural eschatology."

It is certainly this conception of man, as an imaginative and inexhaustibly creative being, that explains the survival of the alchemist's ideals in nineteenth-century ideology. Of course, these ideals were radically secularized in that period. Moreover, the fact that they had survived was not immediately evident at the moment when alchemy itself disappeared. Yet the triumph of experimental science did not abolish the dreams and ideals of the alchemist; on the contrary, the new ideology of the nineteenth century crystallized around the myth of infinite progress. Boosted by the development of the experimental sciences and the progress of industrialization, this ideology took up and carried forward—radical secularization notwithstanding—the millenarian dream of the alchemist. The myth of the perfection and redemption of nature has survived in camouflaged form in the Promethean program of industrialized societies, whose aim is the transformation of nature, and especially the transmutation of matter into energy. It was also in the nineteenth century that man succeeded in supplanting time. His desire to accelerate the natural tempo of organic and inorganic beings now began to be realized, as organic chemists demonstrated the possibility of accelerating and even eliminating time by preparing in laboratories and factories substances that would have taken nature thousands of years to produce. With what he recognizes as most essential in himself—his applied intelligence and his capacity for work—modern man takes upon himself the function of temporal duration; in other words, he takes on the role of time.

[*See also* Gold and Silver; Immortality; *and* Nature, *article on* Religious and Philosophical Speculations.]

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MIRCEA ELIADE

Chinese Alchemy

Definitions of alchemy have generally been based on the experience of a single civilization—usually but not always Europe—and tend to imply that traditions that do not follow the chosen pattern are not the real thing. The sole exception is the definition of H. J. Sheppard: "Alchemy is the art of liberating parts of the Cosmos from temporal existence and achieving perfection which for metals is gold, and, for man, longevity, then immortality, and finally, redemption." This definition might be slightly qualified. Longevity and material immortality may or may not accompany salvation in a given time and place. The evolution of other substances from base materials may be more important than that of gold. In China, for instance, cinnabar was the prototype of elixir substances. Adding the specification that the alchemical art uses chemical change to symbolize the processes by which perfection is attained, we can recognize a pattern common to Hellenistic Alexandria, China, Islam, India, and early modern Europe.

The alchemy of each of the great civilizations was distinct in the knowledge on which it drew, in the symbols it created, and in the purposes for which it was used. These peculiarities depended on public structures of meaning as well as on the private discourse of the groups that took up alchemy.

Alchemy began in close alignment with popular religion, especially among educated groups in the Yangtze region. It was considered one of several disciplines that could lead to individual spiritual perfection and immortality. Some Taoist movements took up its practice after about 500 CE; it influenced both Buddhist and Taoist symbolism and liturgy. The aims and means of alchemy, some important issues in its history, and its far from clear-cut relations with Taoism and with science are discussed below.

Aims and Means. Chinese ideals of individual perfection combined three ideas that would have been incompatible in Egypt or Persia. The desire for immortality, which long preceded formal philosophy or religion, was the first of these ideas. [*See* Immortality.] In popular culture ideals of long life evolved into the notion that life need not end. This was not immortality of the soul in isolation, but immortality of the personality—of all that selfhood implied—within an imperishable physical body. In the most highly elaborated doctrines of immortality, this new physical self was nurtured within by a variety of disciplines including alchemy until, at the moment the "naked child" was fully formed, it would burst forth like a butterfly leaving behind an empty chrysalis, an almost weightless corpse.

The potent personal force that may linger on after someone dies was undifferentiated in the thought of the uneducated, but in the conceptions of specialists it was separated into ten "souls" (three *yang hun* and seven *yin p'o*). [*See* Soul, *article on* Chinese Concepts.] Their normal postmortem dissipation could be prevented only if the body, their common site, could be made to survive with them. That, as Lu Gwei-djen and Joseph Needham have suggested, is why Chinese immortality was bound to be material.

A second implication of immortality was perfection of the spirit. Because there was no dichotomy between the spiritual and the somatic, the refining of the body was not distinct from the activity of spiritual self-cultivation. Immortality was salvation from decrepitude and death. Piety, ritual, morality, and hygiene were equally essential to the prolongation of life. Regardless of whether we consider popular views or those of Taoist, Buddhist, or Confucian initiates, all these kinds of striving were also requisite for the proper orientation of the individual toward the transcendent Way, the Tao, as each tradition defined it. [*See* Tao and Te.]

A third implication of immortality, alongside spiritual and physical perfection, was assumption into a divine hierarchy. In popular thought this hierarchy was bureaucratic, a mirror of the temporal order. In fact, the bureaucratic ideal—of a symmetrical organization in which power and responsibility belonged to the post, and only temporarily to the individual who filled it—

evolved more or less simultaneously in politics and religion.

There were many paths to simultaneous longevity, salvation, and celestial appointment. Meditational, devotional, and ascetic exercises carried out communally by organized religious movements or privately by individual initiates could be supplemented by physiological disciplines, sexual techniques for augmenting the vital forces, dietary regimens, or alchemy.

Why should alchemy have a part to play in this spiritual quest? To rephrase the question, what could the symbology of chemical interaction contribute? Despite the worldly implications of appointment in the divine order, this aim was reached by a mystic path, a process in which the individual attained union with the Way. This process, itself called the Way, perfectly integrated the cosmos, society, and the person.

To embody the Way one had to experience it, whether through direct illumination or through insight. This experience might begin with knowing, but deepened far beyond the limits of rational cognition. As an early alchemical poem from the *Arcane Memorandum of the Red Pine Master* (*Ch'ih-sung-tzu hsüan chi*, probably seventh century or earlier) put it,

> The Perfect Tao is a perfect emptying of heart and mind.
> Within the darkness, unknowable wonders.
> When the wise man has attained the August Source
> In time he will truly reach the clouds.
> (*Yün-chi ch'i-ch'ien* 66.14a)

The nurturant aspect of the Way—seen as activity that brings about perfection in the macrocosm or microcosm—could be observed in the life cycles of living things in nature. One could speak of life cycles not only in plants and animals but in minerals, which, as in Aristotle, matured from earth. Mineral evolution could transcend decay and death, for its end point was the immutable perfection of cinnabar or gold. The evolution of these two substances from base starting points was an obvious metaphor for the process that made mortals immortal. The elixir *(tan)*, originally cinnabar perfected by the Way of nature, came to embody in alchemical thought the potential of humans for perfection. Thus the elixir and the art of making it came to be named for cinnabar *(tan)*, even in instances when the latter was not an ingredient.

The "great work" of the alchemist reproduced the perfecting activity of nature. As a text of circa 900 puts it, "natural cyclically transformed elixir is formed when flowing mercury, embracing [lead], becomes pregnant. . . . In 4,320 years the elixir is finished. . . . It embraces the *ch'i* of sun and moon, *yin* and *yang*, for 4,320 years; thus, upon repletion of its own *ch'i*, it be-

comes a cyclically transformed elixir for immortals of the highest grade and for celestial beings. When in the world below lead and mercury are subjected to the alchemical process for purposes of immortality, [the artificial elixir] is finished in one year. . . . What the alchemist prepares succeeds because of its correspondence on a scale of thousandths" (*Tan lun chüeh chih hsin chien*, p. 126). In other words, the alchemist accomplishes in one year of 4,320 hours (12 Chinese hours per day for a round year of 360 days) what takes nature 4,320 years.

The alchemical process, in other words, is a kind of pilot model of cosmic evolution. The seeker not only shrinks time but reproduces the dimensions of the universe within the confines of his laboratory. He reduces the operation of the Way to spatial and temporal dimensions that he can encompass in contemplation, in the hope of becoming one with it.

The alchemist used a great variety of means—mainly quantitative and qualitative correspondences—to manipulate space and time in this way. His laboratory might be oriented to the cardinal directions, his furnace at the very center, both replete with uranic diagrams. The dimensions of the furnace, the emplacement of steps in its platform, the number and placement of doors for firing, all aligned it with respect to sky and earth.

Since the heat of the fire stood for the nurturant cosmic forces, to recreate these forces required that fire be bound by time. The intensity of fire was thus gradually increased and decreased in carefully timed cycles, using weighed amounts of fuel. The cycle of warmth and cold in the four seasons was reproduced, in the absence of thermometers, by the one precision measuring instrument readily available, the balance. Several carefully designed schedules for increasing and decreasing the weight of charcoal, and charging it into the furnace through a succession of doors, survive. They are not simple cycles, in which the end point is the same as the beginning. Successive end points slowly increase, representing the notion of a change in the alchemical ingredients at once cyclic and progressive.

This cyclic approach to modeling was also apparent in the ingredients. The most influential early processes used two ingredients or two main ingredients that were *yin* and *yang* with respect to each other. They were conjugated and separated through one cycle after another, yielding (in the eyes of the alchemist) a series of progressively more perfect products. The mercury and lead mentioned earlier are examples; another frequently encountered pair is mercury and sulfur, which combine to form vermillion (artificial cinnabar), from which, by heating at a higher temperature, mercury can be recovered. As an alchemist about a thousand years ago

phrased it, "That cinnbar should emerge from mercury and again be killed by mercury; this is the mystery within the mystery" (*Pi yü chu sha han lin yü shu kuei* of Ch'en Ta-shih, in *Cheng-t'ung tao tsang*, vol. 587). Sometimes the progressive cycle-by-cycle changes were achieved by adding additional ingredients, but in the alchemist's eyes the process remained in principle dyadic.

This does not exhaust the metaphors available to the alchemist for his use in reproducing the cyclical energetics of the Way. The figure of the cosmic egg, nurturing from the yolk the gradual differentiation of the fully formed chick, is familiar in all the great alchemical traditions. The alchemical vessel is often referred to as an egg. Persistently in China the alchemical ingredients were actually sealed inside an eggshell; the earliest detailed instructions come from the ninth century CE or somewhat later, the latest from the mid-seventeenth century. A Ming imperial prince of the early fifteenth century carried this approach to its logical conclusion by incubating his cinnabar-filled eggshell under a hen.

Cosmic process could be reenacted not only in a single room but entirely within the adept's body. Meditative techniques of self-cultivation that involve visualizing the circulation of vital energies or cosmic effluvia within the body are ambiguously documented in the fourth century BCE. By the first century CE adepts were establishing relations with a hierarchy of gods within their bodies.

There is nothing intrinsically alchemical (or Taoist) about these exercises, but they provided a basis for internalizing the alchemical process. Metaphors were borrowed from the work of the furnace to express the union of opposites in full realization of the Way. As Farzeen Baldrian-Hussein puts it, "it is from his own body that the adept of internal alchemy *(nei-tan)* constructs his laboratory. In fact he finds within himself all the ingredients and apparatus of traditional alchemy: furnace, reaction vessel, mercury, cinnabar, lead, and other minerals. By a mental and physiological process he furnishes the laboratory, lights the fire of the furnace, keeps watch over the heat, brings about the marriage of the ingredients in the reaction vessel and, once the desired result has been obtained, begins the process anew on a different level" (Hussein, 1984, p. 14).

In an important scripture revealed around 300 CE, the adept controls the movement of the solar pneuma connected with cardiac functions and the lunar pneuma connected with renal functions. The first of these pneumas is called "divine elixir" and the second "liquefied gold." This interiorization of alchemy grew naturally out of the prevalent belief that the body is a microcosm, its vital processes corresponding to those of the physical world, its spirituality embodied in inner gods organized as a mirror image of the celestial and terrestrial bureaucracies.

In the pursuit of these disciplines it is not the product that matters but the process. Even in some texts of external alchemy, either nothing is said about ingesting the elixir, or immortality is said to result from witnessing the "great work." Some descriptions of the forms and colors of the elixir when the reaction vessel is opened suggest that it was contemplated in a heightened state of consciousness.

If a protracted personal experience is the means to immunity from death, the benefits of alchemy are not transferable. But alchemy had other dimensions that made the transfer of elixirs highly desirable. This art could be a source of patronage, whether to underwrite its substantial expenses or to yield profit. A pre-alchemical tradition in medicine made natural drugs of the highest grade effective means to immortality (the two lower grades of drugs replenish depleted vitalities and cure illness). By a natural extension of this line of thought, many physicians studied alchemy as a source of new medicines, and alchemists adapted established drugs to their work.

Many surviving alchemical writings aim at the straightforward preparation of economically or therapeutically desirable substances. Such sources tend naturally to discuss the preparation of alchemical gold as well as elixirs related to cinnabar. Gold is a matter of relatively minor concern in the central tradition of alchemy, with its emphasis on individual self-cultivation.

History. This section will explore three issues pertinent to the relations of religion and alchemy: the beginnings of alchemy in China, the character of change in alchemy, and the historical relations of external and internal alchemy.

Whether alchemy originated earlier in Hellenistic Egypt or China remains uncertain. The earliest testimony from either society has not yet been rigorously dated to within a century. Differing views about Chinese origins vary largely with willingness to accept legends as historical statements.

Cinnabar and similar blood-colored compounds have been connected with ideas of death and immortality since the Neolithic period; that is how most scholars interpret the archaic custom of sprinkling red powders on corpses to be buried. The splendidly preserved corpse of the Lady of Tai (or Dai; died shortly after 168 BCE, excavated 1972) contained high concentrations of mercury and lead. These elements were distributed in a way consistent with ingestion before death. Traces in the intestines include native cinnabar, frequently prescribed by physicians as an immortality drug, rather

than an artificial elixir. An edict dated 144 BCE against falsifying gold is sometimes said to show the prevalence of alchemy, but it presents no evidence that anything more was involved than artisans' use of alloys. In 133 BCE the Martial Emperor was told by an occultist that eating from plates of artificial gold would lengthen his life so that he could seek out certain immortals and, with their help, become an immortal himself by performing certain rituals. This request for patronage links gold indirectly with immortality and suggests that the direct alchemical linkage had not yet been made. As patronage increasingly became available in the decades that followed, the lore of immortals with whom patrons could be put in touch proliferated. "Medicines of immortality" were frequently mentioned, but these were not said to be artificial. Critical scholars find clear proof of the emergence of alchemy only in the earliest treatises on the subject: *Chou i ts'an t'ung ch'i* (Concordance of the Three; partly c. 140 CE, partly ninth century), and the first chapter of the *Huang ti chiu ting shen tan ching* (Canon of the Nine-Vessel Divine Elixir of the Yellow Lord), almost certainly written in the second half of the second century CE.

The chronological priority of East or West is not in fact a pressing issue unless the undertaking in question is substantially the same in both parts of the world. That is not the case. Joseph Needham pinpoints one significant difference when he defines Chinese alchemy as a combination of macrobiotics (the quest for material immortality through drugs) and aurifaction (the attempt to make true gold by artificial means, as distinguished from "aurifiction," in which gold is consciously faked). The centrality of cinnabar is ignored in these definitions. Needham notes that macrobiotics was conspicuously missing from the early occidental art, which he therefore does not consider "true" alchemy.

Other scholars evaluate not only the techniques of the alchemists but also their beliefs. The types of spiritual experience outlined above and the relation of alchemical success to appointment in a divine hierarchy are unique to China. They suggest that the alchemical quest in East Asia, as in Alexandria, cannot be adequately defined by technical goals. Both civilizations used chemical methods and metaphors for redemptive ends. The goals differed because Chinese and Hellenistic Egyptian structures of meaning and values differed. It is fitting to speak of the corresponding arts of both as "true" alchemy and to conclude that—on present knowledge—they emerged at roughly the same time.

The alchemists, unlike modern historians, did not believe that their art evolved or changed. As in any other Chinese religious or technical tradition, its practitioners assumed that its every possibility had been laid out in

the archaic, divine revelations that founded it. In alchemy there were several of these seminal works, including the two already mentioned. These scriptures were to be passed down intact to those worthy to receive them, supplemented by oral explanations. Much explanation was needed, for these founding works (especially the *Concordance of the Three*) were packed with metaphor and symbol, their density multilayered. The inexhaustible meanings of the Sages, in a lesser age, could only be grasped approximately. The issue was not progress in knowledge but regaining ancient wisdom.

Nevertheless alchemical writings over the centuries exhibit an increasingly comprehensive knowledge of chemical processes. They were also increasingly able to accommodate new impulses from popular religion. Some adepts were aware of this new content in alchemy. They attributed it to additional (but in principle timeless) revelations. These are often said to be given by immortals in disguise, "remarkable men" met in strange circumstances or seen in dreams or visions. The static ideal did not rule out change.

Current understanding suggests that external and internal alchemy began together. There is no reason to believe that the practice of both at the same time was a late or gradual development. The *Concordance of the Three* brings an elaborate symbolism to bear on processes that can be understood equally well as external or internal to the body. The book refers not only to the internal alchemy of imaginative visualization but also to sexual disciplines that give the marriage of opposites its ultimately literal expression. Later alchemists disagree about whether sexual practices further or hinder immortality, but a number of important adepts follow the *Concordance of the Three* in seeing external, internal, and sexual alchemy as aspects of a single process. Historians of chemistry thus find it difficult to achieve consensus on whether certain texts are concerned with operations on mineral ingredients.

External alchemy did not retain the vitality of its internal analogue. Writings that reflect new knowledge of chemical processes rarely appear after about 1000. Later writers often said that only outsiders believe that alchemy is to be done—or was ever done—in the laboratory. It thus appears that practice, or at least innovation, in external alchemy had largely ceased. This has been explained by a revival of Confucian ideals that discouraged educated people from doing artisanal work. Another reason may be the ascendancy of meditation and visualization over practical operations in the schools of Taoism that attracted elite enthusiasts in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Occult and manual practices, as noted above, were not mutually exclusive earlier. Another likely cause is general awareness that a

number of emperors and high officials had died as a result of taking alchemical elixirs. To the adept the appearance of death was a sign that the perfected self had hatched out of the old body and taken office among the immortals. To secular humanists intolerant of popular beliefs, this seemed a foolish rationale for suicide.

Alchemy, Science, and Religion. Alchemy has been studied mainly by historians of chemistry, who have shown that the Chinese art exploited the properties of many chemical substances and even incorporated considerable knowledge of quantitative relations. Scholars of medical history have demonstrated close connections between alchemy and medicine, in the substances and processes on which both drew and in the use of artificial, mainly inorganic "elixirs" by physicians to treat disease and lengthen life. Historians have tended to see alchemy as a fledgling science, a precursor of modern inorganic chemistry and iatrochemistry. Lu and Needham speak of internal alchemy as "proto-biochemistry."

This view overlooks the fact that the goals of alchemy were not cognitive. They were consistently focused on immortality and largely concerned with reenacting cosmic process for purposes of contemplation. It is impossible to say with certainty that alchemists discovered any new chemical interaction or process. Since alchemists were literate and craftsmen were not, it is only to be expected that innovations by the latter would be first recorded by the former (who were almost the only members of the elite greatly interested in the chemical arts). Claims that alchemists played major roles in developing gunpowder and distillation apparatus are not supported by independent evidence about the state of contemporary industrial processes, which remained poorly explored for the first millennium CE. Similarly, too little of the medical literature has been studied to permit the generalization that alchemists gave more to medicine than they took from it.

The idea that alchemy is Taoist by nature, or was invented by Taoists, has not survived advances since about 1970 in historical studies of Taoism. In the Celestial Master sect and other early Taoist movements drugs (including artificial preparations) were forbidden; only religious exercises could procure health and divine status. Upper-class initiates gradually began to use fashionable immortality drugs in the north. As refugees after the fall of Lo-yang in 311 they encountered elixirs in the Yangtze region, where alchemy had long been established among popular immortality practices. The aristocratic southerners they displaced in positions of temporal power invented new religious structures to assert, by way of compensation, their spiritual superiority. Michel Strickmann (1979) has demonstrated that in doing so they adapted northern Taoist usages to local

popular practices, in which immortality and alchemy were central, and in which the religious use of inorganic drugs was usual. T'ao Hung-ching, a man of noble southern antecedents, drew on revelations inherited from fourth-century predecessors when he founded the Supreme Purity (or Mao-shan) Taoist movement under imperial patronage in about 500. T'ao adapted not only old southern techniques but elaborate structures of alchemical and astral imagery. T'ao thus formed a movement that captured upper-class allegiance, supported state power, and was supported in return for more than five centuries. He united alchemy with Taoism—the particular Taoism that he created—for the first time. Alchemy did not originate in the Taoist milieu and was never confined to it. Similarly, the role of alchemy in movements other than T'ao's varied too greatly to constitute a fixed relationship.

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NATHAN SIVIN

Indian Alchemy

"Gold is immortality." This correspondence from the Brāhmaṇas grounds the worldview of the Indian alchemist. Just as gold neither corrodes nor loses its bril-

liance with time, so too the human body may realize a perfect and immutable state. In Indian alchemy, this is accomplished through *rasāyana,* "the way of *rasa*" (i.e., of essences), which is the Sanskrit term for the alchemist's craft.

There are early references to chemical and metallurgical alchemical processes in the *Arthaśāstra,* the *Suśruta Saṃhitā,* and the so-called Bower manuscript. But the Indian alchemical tradition proper did not begin until these processes were correlated with techniques and goals of perfecting the body. The history of the word *rasāyana* illustrates this primary concern with bodily perfection. In the ancient Ayurvedic tradition of the *Caraka Saṃhitā,* the term *rasāyana* refers to techniques and processes leading to bodily invigoration and rejuvenation. [*See also* Āyurveda.]

The Indian alchemist's cosmology and metaphysics have their roots in the "emanationism" and microcosm-macrocosm analogues of Sāṃkhya philosophy, of the yogic Upaniṣads, and of Vedānta. According to these philosophies, everything that exists is an emanation or emission (*vyāpana* or *sṛṣṭi*) from an original source or essence. It is destined for reabsorption (*laya* or *pralaya*) into the same. The emanated universe is hierarchical in structure. At the top of the hierarchy is the Absolute, which is variously conceived as Puruṣa, Prakṛti, *brahman,* or a union of Śiva and Śakti. Emanation proceeds down from the Absolute into the manifested world of the five sentient qualities, the senses, and the elements. These also are hierarchically organized, following the system of the *tanmātra*s. Ether, along with its corresponding sense and sentient quality, diffuses downward into air, fire, water, and earth. One can return these gross (*sthūla*) elements of the manifested world to their original, subtle (*sūkṣma*), and perfect state through *saṃskāra*s ("transforming processes"). Here the elements are conceived as stages rather than substances. The process of reintegration conceptually entails the stripping away of sheaths of ultimately illusory form in order to reveal a true and perfect essence.

The semilegendary Nāgārjuna is considered the father of Indian alchemy. There were possibly no less than five alchemists named Nāgārjuna in India between the second and twelfth centuries CE, but their histories are so entangled that scholars have all but been reduced to accepting the general Indian consensus—that "Nāgārjuna" lived for at least eight hundred years! Nāgārjuna is the reputed author or editor of such diverse alchemical texts as the "magic" *Kakṣapuṭa Tantra,* the "mercurial" *Rasendramaṅgalam,* and the "Ayurvedic" *Suśruta Saṃhitā.* [*See also* the biography of Nāgārjuna.]

Buddhist alchemy differs from Hindu alchemy inasmuch as it places greater emphasis on internal yogic processes than on external chemical or mercurial processes. Buddhist alchemy (*rasāyana*) uses chemical substances to prolong the life of the body, but only as a means to the higher end of realizing total liberation through sexual, yogic, and meditative techniques.

Because it emphasizes the use of mercury and drugs in transmutation and in the realization of a perfect (*siddha*) and immortal body, Hindu alchemy is also known as mercurial (*dhātuvāda*) alchemy, in contrast to Buddhist *rasāyana.* The Buddhist yogic and Hindu chemical approaches often overlap, however, and one finds elements of both in the Nāth, Siddha, Sahajiyā, and Vajrayāna Tantric traditions. The flowering of alchemical thought and practice was contemporaneous with that of Tantra, spanning roughly the sixth to the fifteenth centuries CE. Indian alchemists were often characterized as *siddha*s whose metaphysics and techniques at once embraced alchemy, yoga, and Tantra. These traditions also overlap in their "historical" lineages of gurus. Thus the alchemists Gorakh, Carpaṭe, Vyāḍi, and Nāgārjuna figure in the lineages of numerous Tantric traditions, from the Sittar (Siddha) alchemists of south India to the Vajrayāna Buddhists of Tibet. [*See also* the biography of Gorakhnāth.]

The Hindu mercurial alchemist's laboratory is portrayed as a microcosm of the universe. Just as the gross elements of the manifested world ultimately return to the Absolute according to Vedantic philosophy, here the alchemist attempts to effect an analogous reintegration by using physical substances. He makes use of plant, animal, and mineral substances to remount the hierarchy of metals: lead, tin, copper, silver, and gold. The most essential elements that he employs are mercury (*rasa* or *pārada*) and sulphur (*gandhaka*). In Hindu alchemy these elements are conceived as the seed (*bīja* or *bindu*) of the male Śiva and the sexual essence or blood (*śoṇita* or *rajas*) of the female Śakti, respectively.

According to Indian alchemy, yoga, and Tantra, every substance and combination of elements in the universe has its sexual valence. In the Hindu Tantric worldview, the manifest world is the emanation of the eternal union of Śiva and Śakti. Their sexual essences, of which mercury and sulphur are hierophanies, are the means for reintegrating and perfecting the world. The alchemical *saṃskāra*s are described in highly evocative language: mercury pierces or penetrates (*vedhana*) sulphur in order that it may be killed (*mṛta*) and be "reborn" into a purer, more stable state (*bandha*) where it has a greater capacity for transmuting other elements. In the transmutation process mercury penetrates base metals. They are "killed" and "reborn" into increasingly higher states in the hierarchy of metals until finally perfect alchemical gold emerges from the sloughed-off sheaths of

its grosser stages. The language of these *saṃskāra*s is simultaneously one of initiation (as *dīkṣa*), sexuality, and rebirth. The alchemist's craft is conceived of as a spiritual exercise, a ritual, a sacrifice, an act of devotion, and a participation in the divine play of an expanding or contracting universe. It is in such a context that we may best understand immortality as the ultimate goal of mercurial alchemy. In the alchemical universe, mercury (i.e., Śiva's seed or *bīja*) is capable of purifying and perfecting the human body in the same way that it perfects metallic "bodies."

It is through the correspondence of *amṛta-bīja-rasa* that the alchemical hierarchies and processes become fused to the psychochemical system of *kuṇḍalinī* and other forms of yoga. In *kuṇḍalinī* yoga, the yogin, through his austerities, causes his own seed *(bīja)* to mount the six *cakra*s through the agency of the internal (female) *kuṇḍalinī* serpent. As the *kuṇḍalinī* pierces each of the *cakra*s, the heat thus generated transmutes that seed until it becomes pure ambrosia *(amṛta)* in the highest *cakra*, the *sahasrāra*, located in the skull. (In Buddhist alchemy, the analogous sexual yogic practice of "fixing the *bodhicitta*" is the primary means of transmuting the seed into *amṛta*.) The *kuṇḍalinī* then unites with the (male) "full moon" of the *sahasrāra*, such that the *amṛta* built up there rushes down through the body, rejuvenating it and rendering it immortal. [*See also* Kuṇḍalinī.] By taking in compounds of mercury in conjunction with using *mantra*s, *mudrā*s, breathing techniques, and other yogic practices, the alchemist catalyzes psychochemical processes so as to facilitate the perfecting of his body.

The end of these complementary practices is a perfect *(siddha)* body of stable *(sthīra)* processes. This body shines like gold, is as hard and impenetrable as a diamond *(vajra)*, and is possessed of supernatural powers *(siddhi*s). The *siddha*'s body is as if reborn from a body that was previously subject to aging, sickness, and death; now he is *jīvanmukta* (liberated in the body), immortal, and as powerful as the gods themselves. [*See also* Jīvanmukti.] Should he choose to do so, he may enter into *samādhi*, ultimate reintegration with the Absolute. In doing so, he sheds his physical form for total liberation, known as *mokṣa* or *mahāsukha* in Tantric Hinduism and Buddhism, respectively.

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DAVID WHITE

Hellenistic and Medieval Alchemy

By the beginning of the Christian era, a change in secular and religious attitudes can be discerned. The rationalism that had guided the thinking of the elite in previous times waned, and the rise of skepticism and loss of direction led to a philosophical vacuum that stimulated a recourse to mystic intuition and divine mysteries. The area of the Roman empire in which this process became primarily manifest was Egypt, where, after the conquest by Alexander the Great (in 332 BCE), the culture of Hellenism with its fusion of Greek and Eastern features was centered. The fashionable mystery beliefs subsumed under the names of gnosticism and Hermetism exerted a strong attraction for practitioners of the occult sciences (astrology, magic, and medicine) as well as alchemy, the art of making gold: previously, men of science had by thought process and investigations obtained what they now expected to receive through divine revelation or supernatural inspiration. In short, science—as revealed knowledge and, for the alchemist, as a means of creating gold—turned into religion.

Such a link between alchemy and gnosticism and Hermetism is most tangibly documented in the occult literature of Hellenistic Egypt from about the second to

the fourth century. This emphasizes, first, the fact that alchemy, beyond being a craft devoted to changing matter, has a place also within the history of religions and, second, that in the alchemist's religious beliefs the general gnostic tenets blended with his specific alchemical approach to the world. The impact of the craft can be discerned in four aspects of the cult: its doctrine, its ritual, its language, and its roots.

Doctrine. The soul is enchained in matter and is to be freed. Science as traditionally expounded in the schools was unable to liberate it. Only gnosis, the knowledge of God, could accomplish the task, and to convey gnosis, alchemy transformed itself into an esoteric religion. The beliefs were fantastic: visions, the chemical apparatus as a temple, the alchemical operation as a sacrificial act, mental baptism in the Hermetic vessel called the *kratēr*, and the ascension to God by means of a mystic ladder that transports the soul from the discord and suffering below to the divine order above. The doctrines of alchemy as a religion echoed the principles of alchemy as a science. These were essentially three: primal matter, sympathy, and transmutation.

Primal matter. The *opus alchimicum*, ("the alchemist's labor") centered on matter. Nobody knew, of course, what matter was, and it remained a secret of alchemy, although many chemical, mythological, and philosophical definitions were ventured in the course of time (Jung, 1953, p. 317). Thus, the *Tabula Smaragdina* (the revelation of secret alchemical teaching, of the ninth century but based on Hermetic sources) identified matter with God, because all created objects come from a single primal matter; and Comarius, an alchemist-philosopher (first century CE?) identified it with Hades, to whom the imperfect souls were chained (Jung, pp. 299, 319). Such perceptions of matter echo the alchemist's craft: his operation was, in mythical terms, a replica of divine creativity, aiming at the liberation of imprisoned matter. The inherent anthropomorphic view of matter, the "vitalist hypothesis," was going to play a fundamental role in the "sacred art," alchemy: metals, that is, matter, were considered living organisms, which are born, grow, and multiply. With the alchemist's preoccupation with matter and his belief that the divine soul is enchained in matter, he "takes upon himself the duty of carrying out the redeeming *opus*" (Jung, p. 306). Thus seen, the alchemist evolves into a priest.

Sympathy. The anthropomorphic perception of matter that assigned to the metal a human soul correlated with an occult system according to which the supposed affinity between substances expressed itself in a mutual attraction or rejection, that is, either "sympathy" or "antipathy." Such a bond linked, in particular, our world "below" to the world "above," the microcosm of

man to the macrocosm of planetary divinities. The system of correspondences elaborated, for example, by the second-century astrologer Antiochus of Athens (Sheppard, *Ambix* 7, p. 46) embraced, in addition to "above" and "below," also elements, metals, and colors:

COLOR	ELEMENT	METAL	MACROCOSM	MICROCOSM
black	earth	lead	Saturn	body
white	water	silver	Moon	spirit
yellow	fire	gold	Sun	soul

Already Maria Prophetissa (fl. early third century), also known as the "founding mother of alchemy," heralded the principle of parallelism: "Just as man results [from the association] of liquids, of solids, and of spirit, so does copper." Zosimos of Panopolis in Egypt (fl. c. 300), recognizing the identity between the behavior of matter and the events in his own (unconscious) psyche, condensed this complex insight into the formula "What is within is also without."

Transmutation. The third facet of alchemical religiosity was also linked to the alchemist's practice. A basic alchemical tenet stated that all substances could be derived through transmutation from primal matter. The technique of change consisted essentially in "coloring": the Egyptian alchemists did not intend to "make" gold but to color *(baptein)* metals and textiles through tinctures and elixirs so that they would "appear" like gold (or silver or some other metal). A "changed" metal, then, was a "new" metal. The technique of coloring evolved, in the end, into a powerful symbol of alchemical doctrine; for just as the alchemist transformed lead into silver, and silver into gold, so too he posited for matter, in his anthropomorphic view of it, a similar change, from body to spirit to soul. And in the frame of his doctrine, he identified this escalation with the renewal of man, to which he assigned the same chain of transmutations to reach the goal of redemption.

The Ritual. Although the alchemist, who represented the religious bent of his profession, has been viewed as a priest, the identity of his congregation remains unknown. The sources, reading somewhat like tracts of edification, transmit no detail. Some have sensed in the texts evidence of the existence of a loosely structured brotherhood. Others, above all Festugière (1950, pp. 427–428), took the alchemical devotion (like the Hermetic) to be a cult adhered to by individuals or groups who practiced the "sacred art" and came under the spell of the mystic beliefs inherent in their work. Those nonpractitioners of alchemy who felt attracted were possibly members of the intelligentsia drawn to that particular version of modish gnosticism.

The code that the devotee observed had various spe-

cific features. They concern the transmission of the creed, first to him and then from him, and the way of life expected of a spiritual father.

The mystagogues. The myth of transmission added the religious component to alchemical mysticism. The spokesmen invoked the authority of the supreme being, or its prophets, or the sages of old: "Behold [says Isis to her son as alchemist], the mystery has been revealed to you!" (Festugière, 1950, p. 260). Maria Prophetissa claimed that alchemical secrets were revealed to her by God. The Byzantine monk Marianus quoted alchemists saying to Maria: "The divine, hidden, and always splendid, secret is revealed to you."

With Egypt providing the setting of the cult, Egyptian mythical figures and divinities were the prime wellspring of inspiration: chiefly Thoth (hellenized as Hermes Trismegistos), the legendary author of the Hermetica, and Isis, turned into the creators and teachers of alchemy to whom alchemical sayings and doctrines were attributed. Various Greek writings on alchemy that contained traces of Jewish monotheism were ascribed to Moses, probably in a homonymic transfer from the alchemist Moses of Alexandria. Later on, Jewish alchemical tradition evoked Enoch, the Jewish counterpart to Hermes. The Greek alchemist Pseudo-Democritus, looking in Memphis for enlightenment, conjured the ghost of the Persian Ostanes, the "hellenized magus" of alchemy, who advised him: "The books are in the temple." Zosimos, our major source, owed his knowledge to the wisdom of Hermes.

Traditio mystica. The "sacred craft" was a secret craft. The goddess Isis instructs her son Horus: "Keep it a great secret [*megalomustērion*]." The initiated were forbidden to divulge their knowledge; they could pass it on only to their "legitimate sons" and to those who were "worthy." Alchemy, known through revelation, remained a privilege of the few, and the taboo of disclosure, well guarded through the ages, in an impressive example of *traditio mystica*, a very Hermetic feature.

Portrait of the alchemist. Just as revelation strikes the priest, so the divine mystery overwhelms the alchemist and shapes his way of life. His *opus* is not so much determined by technical knowledge and manual skill but, rather, by its true goal, redemption. His soul is to be saved. He has to strive for detachment from matter, for liberation from his passions, and for suppression of his body. He is spiritual man, alone, in search of himself, on a silent quest for God.

The Language of Alchemy. Alchemy, like every other movement in the history of civilization, found its own forms of expression. Their pseudoscientific orientation imparted to the alchemical writings the stamp of mystery, and by displaying the "jargon of mysteries" (Fes-

tugière, 1950, p. 82) these texts produced the effect of liturgy and secured a screen against the profane. Three stylistic markers stand out:

Symbols. The alchemist, in the formulation of Wayne Shuhmaker, "did not analyze but analogized," and his own universe, metallurgy, provided the mythical imagery and stimulated new meanings. The alchemical *opus* centered on the change of matter, and transmutation of matter turned into the recurrent theme of the alchemist's cult. To him, the soul imprisoned in matter symbolized the spirit striving to purify itself from the roughage of the flesh. Matter was represented above all by metal and symbolized life and man, its growth comparable to the growth of the fetus. "The achievement of metallic transmutation became symbolic of the religious regeneration of the human soul" (Sheppard, *Ambix* 17, p. 77). With technical alchemy providing the similes that expressed gnostic religiousity, the two-tiered semantic construct evolved that was characteristic of Hellenistic and medieval mystic language: the worldly, exoteric lexicon furnished the "surface," the *sensus litteralis*, but when applied to esoteric experience it yielded the hidden meaning, the *sensus allegoricus*.

Many lexical items were drawn into the process: thus, in the Valentinian system of gnosticism (deriving from the second-century Egyptian Valentinus), metallurgical terms such as the following symbolized spiritual concepts. *Pneuma* signified, first, the product of natural sublimation, then, "divine spirit"; *ebullient* ("boiling up"), referring to the alchemical process of "separating the pure from the impure," was applied to wisdom; *sperma* (the "embryonic germ") yielded the "seed" of gnosis; in a similar way, such terms as *refine*, *filter*, and *purify* acquired spiritualized meanings. The transfer, through alchemy, from the literal to the symbolic realm contributed richly to the language of religion and, generally, abstraction. It indicates a conscious effort of the alchemist to frame his views in the terms of his craft.

Antonyms. Hellenistic alchemy tended to emphasize the varied contraries inherent in the craft: hot/cold, moist/dry, earth/air, fire/water. Antonymic structure was symbolically superimposed on matter: Maria Prophetissa distinguished metals as male and female as if they were human, and Zosimos distinguished between the metals' souls and bodies. The same antonymy, but with the focus on man himself, characterizes gnostic dualism with its model of spiritual versus carnal man.

Aphorisms. Technical prescriptions, and in particular those that aimed at the transformation of matter, tended to be sharpened and honed so as to sound, in their lapidary style, like keys to mysteries. Such apho-

risms, often bordering on the abstruse, were a favored feature of alchemical doctrine. For example, the first commandment requires secrecy and elitism: "One man to one man." Pseudo-Democritus, on the subject of liberating the imprisoned soul, declared "Transform the nature and make the spirit that is hidden inside the body come out." Maria Prophetissa said likewise, "Invert nature and you will find that which you seek."

Transmutation was tied to the law of sympathy and antipathy: "One nature rejoices in another nature; one nature triumphs over another nature; one nature masters another nature." One of Maria's axioms that subsumed a complex alchemical procedure was read by Jung (1953, p. 23) in psychological terms, according to which the even numbers signified the female principle and the odd numbers the male, the latter overwhelming the former: "One becomes two, two becomes three, and by means of the third the fourth achieves unity; thus two are but one." Maria focuses also on an analogy made between metals and mankind: "Join the male and the female, and you will find what you seek." A well-known aphorism expresses the analogy between macrocosm and microcosm: "That which is above is like to that which is below, and that which is below is like to that which is above." Several maxims rest on the principle of antonymy. The symbol of the serpent biting its tail is used to circumscribe diversity in unity: "The All is one and the All is through itself and the All goes to itself, and if it had not the All there would be no All." The philosophers' stone is simply defined as "a stone that is not a stone."

Roots. The essence of the strange and complex phenomenon of alchemy is elusive, and its various interpreters were inclined to stress the feature that each considered, in genetic terms, to be its foundation. In particular, four possible sources have been isolated: classical philosophy, mystery creeds, the lore of the craft, and the workings of the unconscious.

Classical philosophy. The great cognitions of the classical tradition, from the pre-Socratics to Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics, resurfaced in eclectic Hellenistic philosophy. Numerous doctrines prefigured crucial phases of the alchemical worldview: the concept of a primal matter; the unity of matter (seen in, say, water or fire); cosmic correspondences; the affinity of the similar; the microcosm reflecting the macrocosm; the notion of sympathy; transformation through *pneuma*, the all pervading spirit; genesis, that is, the origin of one element from another, proceding by way of opposites.

Mystery creeds. Hermetism and the alchemical cult overlap in various features. The tie between them is substantiated in the writings of Zosimos, the "divine," the "highly learned," and the outstanding representa-

tive of both creeds. The common ground consisted of "mystic reveries" (Festugière): observation and inquiry were rejected, and intuition replaced science; the "sacred craft" was revealed through divine grace; the chosen were few, bound to secrecy; and the goal was the liberation of the soul from the body.

The lore of the craft. Alchemy, hopelessly aiming at the transformation of metals into gold, has often been viewed as something like a misguided application of chemistry. Yet its significance lies, indeed lay even for its practitioners, not so much in the experimental method and the outcome of metallic transmutation as in other spheres, notably anthropology, religion, and folklore. The story has been reconstructed by Mircea Eliade: it goes back to archaic times and surfaced in Hellenistic Egypt. Its protagonist was the smith, the adept who dominated matter by transforming it. The insights deriving from his work gave rise to new meanings and symbols: matter was suffering; transmutation perfected matter; redemption was freedom from matter. In short, the primary function of alchemy, physical transmutation, escalated into metaphysical transmutation: the *opus alchimicum* became a symbol of the *opus divinum*. The title of one of the prominent alchemical works of the early post-Christian era by Pseudo-Democritus (and ascribed to Bolos from Mendes, in Egypt) stressed the dichotomy: *Phusika kai mustika* (Natural and Mystical Matters).

Depth psychology. The attribution of life to matter was the foundation of alchemical belief. Enticed by the resemblances between the dreams of his patients and alchemical symbols, C. G. Jung read this belief from his psychoanalytic standpoint as the projection of inner experience onto matter, and thus as the identification of matter with the Self. "Matter" evolved as a name for the "self." It represented an unconscious archetype, primordial images, and the alchemical *opus*, aiming at freeing, saving, and perfecting matter, and was a symbolic replica of the universal quest for the Self. Jung called it the "individuation" process.

Convergence. These four components of spiritual alchemy can be traced in Hellenistic Egypt. The craft of the goldsmith was flourishing, and metallurgy yielded the imagery while boosting, by its very nature, the identification, ever present in the human mind, of self and matter; Greek philosophy, in a stage of revival then and there, provided the basic concepts of the doctrine; and Hermetism supplied the vital climate of mystery.

Alchemy is described here as a facet of the ancient mystery religions, and this description centers on its style and manifestations in the Hellenistic period. But other cultures, tending in a similar direction, produced other varieties of spiritual alchemy. In China, it aimed

at physical immortality and thus came into the orbit of medicine, with some link to the religious movement of Taoism. In India, as Eliade has shown, alchemy evolved as an analogue to the mystic discipline of yoga: that purification sought by the yogin for the body, the alchemist seeks through the purification of metals. The relationship (involving the question of polygenesis or monogenesis) between the Chinese, Indian, and Hellenic forms of spiritual alchemy is not very clear. Islamic culture, on the other hand, played a vital role in the transmission of alchemical knowledge; many of the Greek texts were translated into Arabic and through this link, reached the West during the late Middle Ages. Thus, the transmutation of matter continued, with its occult framework, into the Renaissance and beyond. But then modern science rejected ideology, and with the loss of its "exoteric" component to chemistry, alchemy was reduced to its "esoteric" questions about man's relation to the cosmos. In our day the mystic movement of the Rosicrucians, which appeared during the seventeenth century, is a typical relic—and faint echo—of the vanished Hellenistic cult.

[See also Hermetism; Gnosticism; and Rosicrucians.]

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HENRY and RENÉE KAHANE

Islamic Alchemy

The Arabic term for alchemy is *al-kīmiyā'*. The word *kīmiyā'* is alternately derived from the Greek *chumeia* (or *chēmeia*), denoting the "art of transmutation," or from *kim-iya*, a South Chinese term meaning "gold-making juice." Greek and later Hellenistic writings are generally regarded as the initial impetus behind Muslim learning, thus the wide acceptance of the Greek origin of the word.

In the Islamic context, *al-kīmiyā'* refers to the "art" of transmuting substances, both material and spiritual, to their highest form of perfection. The word *kīmiyā'* also refers to the agent or catalyst that effects the transmutation and hence is used as a synonym for *al-iksīr* ("elixir") and *ḥajar al-falāsifah* ("philosopher's stone"). The search for the ideal elixir has been an ancient quest in many cultures of the world; it was supposed to transform metals to their most perfect form (gold) and minerals to their best potency and, if the correct elixir were to be found, to achieve immortality. [See Elixir.] All matter of a particular type, metals for example, were supposed to consist of the same elements. The correct *kīmiyā'* or *iksīr* would enable the transposition of the elements into ideal proportions and cause the metal concerned to be changed from a base form to a perfected form, for instance, copper to gold.

On another level, the philosophical theory of alchemy was used to conceptualize the purification of the soul. The terminology and procedures of alchemy were allegorized and applied to the transformation of the soul from its base, earthly, impure state to pure perfection. Elementary psychological postulations were allegorized as chemical properties. For the mystics, the *iksīr* served as a symbol of the divine truth that changed an unbeliever into a believer. In Ṣūfī literature, the spiritual master purifies the soul of the adept via various processes of spiritual alchemy. This usage of alchemical principles in the spiritual realm reflects the worldview of the ancients, including those of medieval Islam, whereby the human soul was regarded as a microcosm of the forces and principles contained in the macrocosm of the universe.

Historical Background. In Muslim tradition, alchemy enjoys ancient roots. The cultivation of alchemy is traced back to Adam, followed by most of the major prophets and sages. This chain of transmission is then connected to the "masters" from the ancient world, including Aristotle, Galen, Socrates, Plato, and others. Muslims are considered to have received the art from these masters. In Islamic times, the prophet Muhammad (d. 632 CE), is said to have endorsed the art, lending it grace and power; his cousin and son-in-law, 'Alī

ibn Abī Tālib (d. 661), is regarded as its patron. 'Alī's descendant Jaʿfar al-Sādiq (d. 765) is portrayed as the next major transmitter. The Umayyad prince Khālid ibn Yazīd (660–704) is depicted as both a practitioner and a patron of alchemy who encouraged the translation of relevant Greek and Syriac texts into Arabic. Legendary tales indicate that he learned the art from a Syrian monk named Marianos, whom he sought out on long journeys to strange lands. Jābir ibn Hayyān (d. c. 815), who is held to be the disciple of Jaʿfar al-Sādiq, is credited with over three hundred treatises on alchemy; consequently, the name of this quasi-historical figure came to imply the authority and teacher *par excellence*.

The Jabirian corpus. By contrast with these legendary accounts, modern scholarship places the development of Islamic alchemy in the ninth century. Jābir ibn Hayyān is indeed recorded as the first major alchemist, but the writings attributed to him are mainly pseudepigraphical, and many appeared as late as the tenth century. The *Book of Mercy*, the *Book of the Balances*, the *Book of One Hundred and Twelve*, the *Seventy Books*, and the *Five Hundred Books* are some of the important works in the collection. Movements such as the Ikhwān al-Safāʾ (Brethren of Purity) probably influenced or even contributed to some of the treatises in the Jabirian corpus, which forms an important source of information on alchemic techniques, equipment, materials, and attitudes.

According to the sulfur-mercury theory of metals introduced in the corpus, all metals were considered to possess these two elements, or the two principles they represent, in varying proportions, the combination of which lends each metal its peculiarities. Sulfur was responsible for the hot/dry features and mercury, the cold/moist ones. (Aristotle considered these four features to be represented by fire, earth, air, and water respectively.) Sulfur and mercury embody the positive and negative aspects of matter, also referred to as male and female properties.

The *Book of Balances* theorizes that the metals are generated from contrary elements. Each body expresses an equilibrium of the natures composing it, and this harmony can be expressed numerically by the musical harmony that governs the heavens. The qualitative differences and degrees of intensity of the natures are analogous to the differences of tone in the musical scale. Further, each body represents a balance between internal and two external qualities, with each metal characterized by two internal and two external qualities. The transmutation of one metal into another is thus an adjustment of the ratio of the latent and manifest constituents of the first to the second, an adjustment to be brought about by an elixir. Each metal is regarded as

an inversion of one of the others, and transmutation is a simple changing of qualities, which could be accomplished the same way that a physician cures by counterbalancing an excessive humor with one of contrary quality. The elixirs, in other words, were the alchemists' medicines.

According to the Jabirian corpus, there are various elixirs suitable for specific transmutations, but transmutations of every kind could be brought about by a grand or master elixir, the prime focus of the alchemists' endeavors. An important and original link between theory and practice is provided by the Jabirian author of the *Seventy Books*, who explains that material phenomena can be separated not only into their elements but into the contrary qualities by distillation. The inflammable and nonflammable vapors that are usually evolved when organic matter is subject to heat for distillation are considered to represent "fire" and "air." The condensable liquid that follows from the process is called "water," and the residue "earth." The author then attempts the division of these elements into the pair of qualities of which each was made. He claims not only that this process is applicable to organic matter but that even the hardest stones are distillable. The use of elixirs from the distillation of organic materials, which has been called a Jabirian innovation, indicates the medical orientation of alchemy. It is in their extensive pursuit of the elixir that the Jabirian treatises resemble those of al-Rāzī.

Al-Rāzī. The physician and philosopher Muhammad ibn Zakariyāʾ al-Rāzī (d. 925) is the next Muslim alchemist who made a major impact on the art. To the sulfur-mercury theory of the constitution of metals he added the attribute of salinity. The popular conception of alchemy with three elements—sulfur, mercury, and salt—reappeared in Europe and played an important role in Western alchemy. According to al-Rāzī, bodies were composed of invisible elements (atoms) and of empty space that lay between them. These atoms were eternal and possessed a certain size. This conception seems close to the explanation of the structure of matter in modern physics. Al-Rāzī's books, *Sirr al asrār* (The Secret of Secrets) and *Madkhal al-taʿlīmī* (Instructive [or Practical] Introduction), are important sources for understanding the principles and techniques of alchemy as practiced in the tenth-century Muslim world, specifically Iran. In them, he provides a systematic classification of carefully observed and verified facts regarding chemical substances, reactions, and apparatus, described in language that is free of mysticism and ambiguity. Of the voluminous Jabirian writings only the *Book of Mercy* is mentioned by al-Rāzī, perhaps because the other works were composed after his lifetime.

Other masters. Muḥammad ibn 'Umayil (tenth century) was famous for his *Kitāb al-ma' al-waraqī* (The Book of the Silvery Water and the Starry Earth) and *Kitāb al'ilm al-muktasab*, two of his main works on alchemy. The writings attributed to 'Ali ibn Waḥshīyā' (a legendary figure of the tenth century) provided encyclopedic information on the tradition of alchemy in Islam. He is an important source of information on the alchemists and their art. He also provides the views of prominent nonalchemists on the subject. Another important work compiled at this time is the *Muṣḥaf al-jamā'ah*, known as the *Turba philosophorum* in its famous Latin translation; here the author, who has yet to be definitely identified, describes an ancient congress of alchemists chaired by Pythagoras, with Archelaus recording the doctrines expounded by nine pre-Socratic philosophers. Maslamah al-Majrīṭī (d. 1007?) was the author of the famous alchemical guide *Rutbat al-ḥakīm* (The Step of the Sages); his book on practical magic, *Gha'yat al-ḥakīm* (The Limit of the Sages), was also very popular and was translated in the West. A notable figure in the following century is Ḥusayn 'Ali al-Tughrā'i (d. 1121?), author of the important defense of alchemy *Kitāb ḥaqā'iq al-isthishād fī-al-kīmiyā'* (Truths of the Evidence Submitted with Regard to Alchemy). Written in 1112, the work is a strong refutation of the negative polemics of Ibn Sīnā. Later documentation of the practice of alchemy is provided by the Egyptian Aydamir ibn 'Alī al-Jildakī (d. 1360), whose encyclopedic works provide us with summaries of and commentaries upon everything that had been written on alchemy and magic before him.

Opposition to the Art. Although widespread, alchemy did not have the approval of all Muslim scholars. Thus Ibn Sīnā (d. 1035) censured it as a futile activity and contested the assertion that man is able to imitate nature. He asserted that the alchemists were only able to make something that externally resembles the precious metals, since the actual substance of base metals remained unchanged. The great North African historian Ibn Khaldūn (d. 1406) also made a critical assessment of Arab-Islamic alchemical activities. He characterized alchemy as the study of the properties, virtues, and temperatures of the elements used for the preparation of and search for an elixir that could transform lesser metals into gold. Elements used for the elixir included animal refuse, urine, manure, bones, feathers, blood, hair, eggs, and nails, as well as minerals. Distillation, sublimation, calcination, and other techniques were used to separate elements in the extracts used in the preparation of the elixir. Alchemists believed that if the correct elixir could be obtained by these methods, it could then be added to concocted lead, copper, or tin

over fire to yield pure gold. For his part, Ibn Khaldūn rejected the alchemists' claims that their transmutations were intended to perfect the work of nature by mechanical and technical procedures. He also criticized the authenticity of works ascribed to Khālid ibn Yazīd and argued that the elaborate sciences and arts of Islam had not been developed in that early time.

Influence on the West. Islamic alchemy was brought to the West in the twelfth century, mostly through translations. The earliest extant Latin translation of an Arabic treatise on alchemy is generally considered to be Robert of Chester's work *De compositione alchemiae*, dating from 1144. Some scholars consider it as a possible later Latin forgery, but this issue is very complicated and requires further study. About the same time, Gerard of Cremona (1114–1187) translated the Jabirian *Seventy Books* into Latin; *De aluminibus et salibus* and *Liber luminis luminum* are considered his translations. Other works that seem to be translations from Arabic prior to the appearance of the first indigenous European alchemical writing (the *Ars alchemia*, c. 1225, attributed to Michael Scot, d. 1232) were the *De anima* of Ibn Sīnā, the *Turba philosophorum*, the *Emerald Tablet*, the *Secret of Creation*, and al-Rāzī's *Secret of Secrets*. Thus it seems that the majority of celebrated Islamic alchemical works were known in Europe by the middle of the thirteenth century.

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HABIBEH RAHIM

Renaissance Alchemy

The Renaissance and post-Renaissance period marked both the high point and the turning point of alchemy in the West. During the same years in which Kepler, Galileo, Descartes, Boyle, and Newton wrote their revolutionary scientific works, more alchemical texts were published than ever before. But under the impact first of the Reformation and later of the seventeenth-century scientific revolution, alchemy was profoundly changed and ultimately discredited. The organic, qualitative theories of the alchemists were replaced by an atomistic, mechanical model of change, which eventually undermined the alchemical theory of transmutation. The balance between the spiritual and the physical, which had characterized alchemical thought throughout its long history, was shattered, and alchemy was split into two halves, theosophy and the practical laboratory science of chemistry. [*See* Theosophy.]

The Practice of Alchemy. For the most part Renaissance alchemists accepted the theories and practices of their ancient and medieval predecessors. By the time the study of alchemy came to Europe, it was already an established discipline with a respected past. The theories upon which it was based were an integral part of ancient philosophy. Western scientists accepted these theories precisely because they provided plausible explanations for the way events were observed to occur in nature and the laboratory. Transmutation was seen to be an aspect of all forms of change. Caterpillars turn into butterflies; ice melts; food becomes flesh. Long before there were practicing alchemists, the mechanism behind these transformations was investigated. The ancients had supplied explanations that satisfied most alchemists up to the seventeenth century. By combining Aristotelian physics, Stoicism, and Hermetism, Western alchemists evolved a vitalistic philosophy that viewed all phenomena as alive and striving for perfection.

Whatever is imperfect (the base metal lead, for example) will eventually become perfect (gold) in the course of time or with the help of the mysterious substance known to alchemists as the philosopher's stone.

Although transmutation appeared straightforward on a theoretical level, it proved more difficult to accomplish in practice. Thomas Norton, a famous fifteenth-century English alchemist whose *Ordinall of Alkimy* was one of the most popular alchemical works of the period, describes how frustrating the work of an alchemist could be. Just finding the appropriate raw materials was difficult enough. Norton gives a poignant portrait of an alchemist who has fallen into despair because after years of fruitless experimenting he cannot decide what to try next. Even if an alchemist was lucky enough to choose the right ingredients, he had the additional problem of determining what to do with them.

The steps of transmutation were laid out clearly in respect to color. The work had to proceed from the black stage, during which time the alchemists believed they killed the substances in their vessels, through the white stage, during which the ingredients were purified, to the final red stage, which marked the successful fabrication of the philosopher's stone. As Norton explains, "Red is the last work in Alkimy."

Although the color sequence was well established, Renaissance alchemists could not agree on the chemical processes necessary to produce the change from black to white to red. The most optimistic practitioners said the stone was made from one substance in one vessel in one operation, but judging from pictures depicting the cluttered array of apparatus littering laboratory floors, most alchemists took a less sanguine and simplistic view of their task. Daniel Stolcius illustrates eleven chemical processes in his book on alchemical emblems (*Viridarium chymicum* . . . , 1624). Salomon Trismosin reduced the number to seven in his *Splendor Solis*. George Ripley, another respected English adept, describes twelve steps in his *Twelve Gates of Alchemy*. Dom Pernety, a French alchemist living in the eighteenth century, associates each process with one sign of the zodiac:

1. calcination (Aries)
2. congelation (Taurus)
3. fixation (Gemini)
4. dissolution (Cancer)
5. digestion (Leo)
6. distillation (Virgo)
7. sublimation (Libra)
8. separation (Scorpio)
9. ceration (Sagittarius)
10. fermentation (Capricorn)

11. multiplication (Aquarius)
12. projection (Pisces)

Alchemy had always been profoundly influenced by astrology. Since the alchemical signs of the seven metals were those of the seven planets, it seemed reasonable to assume that in their reactions they would respond to the movements of their namesakes in the heavens above.

It is not easy to describe and distinguish all the different alchemical processes. Calcination is simple enough: it involved heating a substance in an open or closed vessel and usually included oxidation and the blackening of the substance. (This process may have given alchemy one of its many names, "the black art".) Calcination was described by alchemists as "mortification," "death," or "putrefaction," and the alchemical vessel in which it occurred was the "tomb," the "coffin," even "Hades" or "Hell." Congelation and fixation consisted of making the substances solid and nonvolatile. This essential step brought the alchemist closer to gold, the most stable and "fixed" of all the metals. Dissolution and digestion were connected with the white stage and purification. Distillation and sublimation were confused by alchemists until the eighteenth century, but both processes awed them. When they saw vapors rise, condense, and revaporize, they thought they were witnessing a miraculous transformation in which the "soul" of matter separated from its "body" and reunited with it in a purer state.

Separation was an elastic term describing the filtration, decantation, or distillation of a liquid from its residue. With fermentation, multiplication, and projection, we arrive at the heart of the alchemical work of making the philosopher's stone. Through fermentation, the stone became akin to yeast and acquired the power to transmute substances. Multiplication augmented the power of the stone to such a degree that it could transmute many times its weight of base metal without losing its strength. In the final process, projection, the stone was made into a powder and thrown on whatever was to be transmuted.

Estimates about the length of time it took to make the philosopher's stone varied from one day to twelve years. The common analogy between the stone and a child (the stone was often referred to as the "royal child" or "son") explains why nine months was frequently cited. The conflicting estimates lead one to agree with Thomas Norton that for the alchemist patience was a preeminent virtue.

Another difficulty facing the alchemist was the regulation of his fire. Since a practical thermometer was not invented until the eighteenth century, this was an almost impossible task. Many alchemists inadvertently blew up their experiments by applying too much heat or ruined months of work by allowing the fire to die out. The problem of heat was so crucial that Norton devoted a chapter of his *Ordinall* to the subject and describes the alchemist who properly controls his fire as "a parfet Master."

The obscurity of alchemical texts provided a final and often insurmountable obstacle facing Renaissance alchemists. Alchemists were masters of metaphor. They dressed up their instructions in parables and allegories, veiled them in symbols, delighted in enigmas, and preferred to call a substance by any name other than its common one. Even the great genius Sir Isaac Newton found himself baffled by the obscurity of alchemical literature and symbolism.

The opacity of alchemical writings was partly a response to opposition from the church, which was suspicious of the religious implications of alchemical symbolism. Alchemists were also justifiably afraid of running afoul of national laws against counterfeiting; they were afraid of being kidnapped as well. Alchemical literature is filled with stories of adepts captured by impoverished adventurers intent on wresting the secret of transmutation from them. It was therefore only prudent for alchemists to disguise their secret wisdom as well as their own identities.

Aside from the real dangers of imprisonment, excommunication, or capture, there were other reasons for the obscurity of alchemical writings. Over the centuries, the meaning of many alchemical terms changed, and the continual translation of alchemical texts (from Greek to Arabic to Latin and then into the vernaculars) compounded the confusion. The most important reason for their obscurity, however, is rooted in the nature of alchemy itself. Alchemy shared the same mystical associations that surrounded mining and metallurgy among ancient and primitive peoples. [*See* Metals and Metallurgy.] Alchemy was as much a spiritual process as a physical one, and the obscurity of alchemical language reflects its religious orientation.

Alchemy as a Spiritual Discipline. Mystery and religion, which were a part of alchemy from its beginnings, gained in importance from the Renaissance onward. In many cases alchemy moved out of the laboratory altogether and into the monk's cell or philosopher's study. "Our gold is not common gold," wrote the sixteenth-century author of the *Rosary of Philosophers*. The popularity of alchemy as a spiritual discipline coincided with the breakdown of religious orthodoxy and social organization during the Renaissance and the Reformation. Petrus Bonus was one of the many alchemists to emphasize the spiritual nature of alchemy. It was, he

says in his work *The New Pearl of Great Price*, revealed by God, not for man's material comfort, but for his spiritual well-being. For these spiritual alchemists, alchemy had nothing to do with the making of gold. (They dismissed those alchemists benighted enough to think it did as "sooty empiricks" or "puffers.") All the ingredients mentioned in alchemical recipes—the minerals, metals, acids, compounds, and mixtures—were in truth only one, the alchemist himself. He was the base matter in need of purification by the fire; and the acid needed to accomplish this transformation came from his own spiritual malaise and longing for wholeness and peace. The various alchemical processes had nothing to do with chemical change; they were steps in the mysterious process of spiritual regeneration. Spiritual alchemists constantly stress the moral requirements of their art. The author of *Aurora Consurgens*, for example, insists that alchemists must be humble, holy, chaste, virtuous, faithful, charitable, temperate, and obedient. These are not qualities expected of a practical chemist. That they were emphasized by spiritual alchemists demonstrates how dominant the religious aspects of alchemy had become.

The interpretation of alchemy as a spiritual discipline offended many churchmen, who viewed the combination of alchemical concepts and Christian dogma in the writings of spiritual alchemists as dangerous heresy. One of the most daring appropriations of Christian symbolism was made by Nicholas Melchior of Hermanstadt, who expounded the alchemical work in the form of a mass. Melchior had been anticipated to some extent by Thomas Norton, who had called his book an "Ordinall." Heinrich Khunrath (1560–1601) provides another example of alchemy's spiritual extremists. In his *The Amphitheatre of Eternal Wisdom*, Khunrath interprets transmutation as a mystical process occurring within the adept's soul. He calls the alchemist's laboratory a *Lab Oratorium*. Spiritual alchemists like Khunrath often identified the philosopher's stone with Christ on the grounds that both redeemed base matter. Hermann Kopp, the nineteenth-century historian of alchemy, was scandalized by the parallel drawn between Christ and the philosopher's stone, which subject took up more than fifty pages in the alchemical tract *Der Wasserstein der Weysen* (*Die Alchemie in älterer und neuer Zeit*, 1886, vol. 1, p. 254). Not only did spiritual alchemists identify the philosopher's stone with Christ, but they identified themselves with both. The heresy involved is obvious. Luther was one of the few highly placed churchmen to praise alchemy both for its practical uses and for its verification of Christian doctrine.

Alchemists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries drew many of their ideas from Renaissance Neoplato-

nism and Hermetism. In all three systems, the world was seen as a single organism penetrated by spiritual forces that worked at all levels, the vegetable, animal, human, and spiritual. Frances Yates has brilliantly described the "magus" mentality that evolved from these ideas and encouraged men to believe they could understand and control their environment. This state of mind is illustrated in the writings of Paracelsus (1493–1541). For Paracelsus, God was the divine alchemist, who created the world by calcinating, congealing, distilling, and sublimating the elements of chaos. Chemistry was the key to the universe, which would disclose the secrets of theology, physics, and medicine. The alchemist had only to read the reactions in his laboratory on a grand scale to fathom the mysteries of creation.

Renaissance Alchemy and Modern Science. By instilling some of the grandiose ideas of spiritual alchemy into the practical study of chemical reactions, Paracelsus and his followers transformed alchemy into a universal science of matter concerned with every aspect of material change. "Chemistry is nothing else but the Art and Knowledge of Nature itself," wrote Nicolas le Fèvre in his popular book, *A Compleat Body of Chemistry* (1670). This greatly expanded vision of alchemy's role struck a responsive cord in the millenarian movements prevalent in Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Rosicrucian manifestos were typical of the utopian visions in the air. Using the language and imagery of spiritual alchemy, they called for the regeneration of society and outlined in broad strokes the social, economic, political, and religious reforms necessary.

No one knows who wrote the Rosicrucian manifestos. They have been attributed to Johann Valentin Andrea (1586–1654), whose acknowledged writings contain a similar blend of utopianism and spiritual alchemy. In his most famous work, *Christianopolis*, Andrea describes an ideal society organized to promote the health, education, and welfare of its citizens. One of the institutions in this society is a "laboratory" dedicated to the investigation of nature and to the application of useful discoveries for the public good.

Francis Bacon (1561–1626) was one of the many philosophers influenced by the Rosicrucian manifestos. Bacon looked forward to what he called a "Great Instauration" of learning that would herald the return of the Golden Age. He described this in his own utopia, *The New Atlantis*.

Neither Andrea nor Bacon said much that was new or significant in terms of science. What was novel in their visions was the idea of a scientific institution whose members worked by a common method toward a common goal. The secrecy and mystery that had been such

a basic part of alchemy played no role in the scientific societies each describes, although their visions had been sparked by the utopian schemes of spiritual alchemists. This was one of the most important innovations to emerge in all the utopian literature of the seventeenth century and the one that had the greatest impact on the decline of alchemy. Once alchemists openly communicated their discoveries, the stage was set for the tremendous advances we have come to expect from the natural sciences.

In 1655 a small book was published entitled *Chymical, Medicinal, and Churgical Addresses: Made to Samuel Hartlib, Esquire.* Between the covers of this slim volume, the old and the new alchemy lie side by side. The arcane and bombastic variety of spiritual alchemy is represented by Eirenaeus Philalethes's *Ripley's Epistle to King Edward Unfolded*; but the new alchemy, dedicated to the cooperative investigation of nature for the public good, is advocated in a treatise by Robert Boyle significantly entitled *An Invitation to a free and generous Communication of Secrets and Receits of Physick.* Boyle urged alchemists to share their secrets for the sake of common charity and scientific advancement.

The Reformation was both a cause and a consequence of a growing attitude of philosophical skepticism, which brought all the wisdom of past ages into doubt. Although skepticism was bitterly opposed by philosophers and theologians on the grounds that it undermined the very possibility of rational knowledge, it paradoxically contributed in the long run to the development of a constructive scientific method that benefited all the sciences. Observation and experiment became the shibboleths of the new science and, eventually, the cause of alchemy's undoing. As more and more negative evidence was gradually accumulated through careful laboratory experiments, the alchemical dream of transmutation faded into the recesses of history.

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ALLISON COUDERT

ALCUIN (730/40–804), also known as Albinus; educator, poet, theologian, and liturgist successively at York, the Carolingian court, and Saint-Martin's, Tours. The son of a Northumbrian small landowner, Alcuin joined the York cathedral community in boyhood; he maintained a lifelong devotion to it and to its magister Ælbert, whose influence on him was rivaled only by the writings of Bede. When Ælbert was archbishop (767–778/80), the deacon Alcuin was entrusted with the teaching of adolescents (age fourteen and upward), including some attracted from other lands. His devotion to York's "saints" (e.g., its bishops) but also his concern about the failures of recent Northumbrian kings were expressed in a long poem written in the 780s. In 781, while in Italy, Alcuin met Charlemagne, who invited him to his court. By the late 780s he stood out from other clerics and scholars there because of his influence on royal administrative and other texts, and because of his qualities as a teacher. He was again in York from 790 to 793, trying to guide a weak king; and while there he was asked by Charlemagne to comment on the problem of images. Returning to Francia, he was responsible for the Synod of Frankfort's major statements against the Spanish adoptionist heresy (794).

The teaching Alcuin provided in the spelling (and pronunciation) of Latin, in grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic, was partly written down in the mid-790s. In the same period he was composing or adapting earlier prayers for private use and for new masses; the contention that he was responsible for the Supplement to the Roman Gregorian sacramentary cannot be supported. He argued strongly that conversion from paganism

could only be by conviction and not imposed. Moving to Saint-Martin's as its abbot in 796/7, Alcuin engaged in an extensive correspondence with the king, fellow scholars, and former pupils; he also attracted younger scholars to Tours, in whose circle ancient logic was applied to theological problems. He produced increasingly elaborate critiques of adoptionism, drawing on a wide range of patristic and other texts; he wrote useful if hardly independent works of exegesis and a substantial work on the Trinity. He played a formative part in the preparation for the Imperial Coronation of 800, although the uniquely important part sometimes claimed for him is questionable. He supervised the production of an excellent working text of the Vulgate, widely disseminated in the ninth century by Tours scribes. One of his last works was a substantial handbook for private devotion. Much of his teaching was quickly out-of-date because his own pupils improved on it, but his personal reputation began to diminish only in the later ninth century. His pedagogic works were used by some eleventh- and twelfth-century cathedral schools, and ordinary parish priests read his work on the Trinity throughout the Middle Ages. Clergy and laity have prayed in Alcuin's words down to the twentieth century.

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DONALD A. BULLOUGH

ÁLFAR ("elves") are classified in northern Germanic mythology as a superhuman race, as are giants, dwarfs, and the ruling gods, the Æsir and Vanir. The *álfar* are divided into two groups: those who dwell in the sky and those who live beneath the earth. The mythographer Snorri Sturluson (1179–1241) speaks of sky-dwelling "light elves" and earth-dwelling "dark elves." The light elves are closely allied with the gods and share their dwellings in the sky (the home of the god Freyr is called Álfheimr, "elf home"). Although the function, form, or activity of sky-dwelling elves is not mentioned, mythical poetry accentuates their alliance with the gods through the recurrent phrase "Æsir and elves."

The attributes of earth-dwelling *álfar* are, however, vividly described. The dark elves, skilled in smithcraft like the dwarfs and sometimes indistinguishable from them, presented the gods with their most precious possessions. Prose narratives depict the *álfar* as earth-dwelling spirits of great potency and sometimes describe female *álfar* as skilled in weaving magic cloth or as endowed with seductive beauty.

The *álfa-blót* ("sacrifice to the elves") was offered in Sweden in late autumn on individual farmsteads. A Norwegian king was venerated after death as an *álfr*. The *álfar* thus were recipients of cultic worship. Yet they were also ranged with monsters and with witches. The Old Norse word *álfr* corresponds to Old English *ælf* and Old High German *alp*, designating spirits that share a dual nature of beauty and monstrosity.

Scholars consider the *álfar* as forces either of fruitfulness or of death, but the *álfar* show such divergent, contradictory qualities that it is not possible to obtain a clear image of their nature. Obviously, they were potent forces of enduring significance. The term *álfar*, however, extends in meaning to include spirits from many areas of faith and literature.

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LOTTE MOTZ

ALFASI, YITSḤAQ BEN YA'AQOV (1013–1103), also known by the acronym RIF (Rabbi Yitsḥaq al-Fasi); North African–Spanish Talmudist. Alfasi spent the majority of his life in North Africa, where he headed the school in Fez (Fas in Arabic, hence his name). At the age of seventy-five he was forced by political intrigues to leave for Spain, where he presided over the school at Lucena. Despite the hostility of some native scholars, the aged Alfasi gained wide recognition in his new home, attracted many disciples (among them the bril-

liant Yosef ibn Migash, his successor at Lucena), and was described by the twelfth-century historian Avraham ibn Daud as the leading scholar of his time. Alfasi's exposure to Spanish Jewry came at the end of his long life; he was not attracted to the philosophy and belles lettres characteristic of Spain but remained a towering Talmudist.

Alfasi's major achievement was his digest of Talmudic law, *Sefer ha-halakhot* (Book of Laws; Jerusalem, 1969), which encompassed all topics relevant to Jewish practice of his time, thus eliminating materials connected with the Temple and its system of priestly dues, sacrifices, and related purities. Coming toward the end of the geonic period, Alfasi perfected the digest form pioneered by the eighth-century *Halakhot gedolot* and others. Like them, he retains the structure of the Talmud itself, which he condenses, rather than presenting a topical discussion (for which some precedent already existed) or a code. Nonetheless, Alfasi's work overshadowed that of his predecessors completely. In essence, he managed to strike a balance between the prolix, often indecisive Talmudic discussion and the brief, intellectually unsatisfying digest of earlier authorities. Alfasi's digest provided the halakhic decision through its careful elimination and shaping of materials, yet it also retained the basic Talmudic discussion. Thus, his work satisfied the needs of authorities and students alike. Indeed, Alfasi's work was often studied in place of the Talmud, inasmuch as it presented the most significant aspects of the Talmudic discussion and guided the student toward a conclusive position on the given issue. Ibn Daud appropriately termed the digest a "miniature Talmud," and the name stuck.

The degree and nature of Alfasi's independence was already a topic of discussion in late medieval times. It would appear that Alfasi occasionally adopted a critical stance toward certain Talmudic materials, and this evaluative posture is a component of his decision-making process. This aspect of his work came to the fore when he decided on the status of various Talmudic comments, a technique apparently utilized later by Maimonides. Alfasi was a central figure in assuring the Babylonian Talmud's ascendency over the Palestinian Talmud: his statement (at the close of his digest of *'Eruvin*) that the Babylonian Talmud, being the later work, knew and incorporated all that was valuable in the Palestinian had great circulation and influence. Nonetheless, modern scholars are divided as to the extent of Alfasi's own rejection of the Palestinian Talmud. Alfasi's attitude toward the nonlegal (aggadic) portions of the Talmud is also noteworthy: unlike his predecessors, he included moral and theological materials that bore on actual practice.

Alfasi's digest became a major force in the subsequent shaping of Jewish law. Maimonides considered himself to be in the line of Alfasian tradition, claiming that he was in basic disagreement with Alfasi on only ten issues. Yosef Karo named Alfasi as one of the three authoritative medieval sources for his *Shulḥan 'arukh*, the basic code of Jewish law that Karo compiled in the sixteenth century. [*See* Halakhah, *article on* History of Halakhah.]

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GERALD J. BLIDSTEIN

'ALĪ IBN ABĪ ṬĀLIB (d. AH 40/661 CE), cousin and son-in-law of Muḥammad; later the fourth caliph of the Muslim community. His father, Abū Ṭālib, was the son of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim, the keeper of the keys of the Ka'bah (a prestigious post in the pre-Islamic society of Mecca). His mother was Fāṭimah bint Asad ibn Hāshim. According to popular traditon 'Alī received the surname Abū Turāb ("father of dust") from Muḥammad. In addition he is also called Asad Allāh, "the lion of God," and Ḥaydar, "lion," because of his courage and energy in battle, and al-Murtaḍā, "the chosen one."

Life. Tradition maintains that 'Alī was born circa 599 CE, inside the Ka'bah in Mecca. In early childhood, at about age five, he was taken in by Muḥammad in order to relieve Abū Ṭālib from financial pressure. At age ten or eleven he enthusiastically accepted Muḥammad's prophecy. According to some accounts, he was the first to acknowledge Muḥammad as prophet, though this honor is usually given to Khadījah, Muḥammad's first wife. Whether he was the second after Khadījah or third after Khadījah and Abū Bakr has been an issue of debate between Shī'ī and Sunnī Muslims, but it is usually resolved by the consensus that Khadījah was first among women, Abū Bakr the first among adult men, and 'Alī the first among children to accept the message of Islam.

Tradition maintains that 'Alī was fiercely loyal to the Prophet. In order to throw off the Prophet's would-be assassins, for instance, 'Alī occupied Muḥammad's bed on the night of the emigration (Hijrah) from Mecca to Medina. He then went on to Medina after he returned to the owners the possessions they had left near the Prophet for safekeeping. In the second year of the

Hijrah 'Alī married Fāṭimah, Muḥammad's youngest daughter; their two sons, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, were to play a prominent role in later Islamic history. After the death of Fāṭimah, he took other wives, and some of the children from these marriages were also important for the issue of leadership in the community.

During Muḥammad's lifetime 'Alī participated in almost all the expeditions from Medina, frequently as standard-bearer and twice as commander. The courage he displayed was to take on legendary proportions in the popular imagination. When the Prophet died, 'Alī made no attempt to gain control of the community. During the election of Abū Bakr as Muḥammad's successor, 'Alī remained in the Prophet's house with a few other companions to prepare for the burial. According to tradition he was a valued counselor to the first three caliphs (Arab., *khalīfah*, "successor [to the Prophet]"); because of his excellent knowledge of the Qur'ān and the *sunnah* (prophetic tradition), he was asked for advice on statutes and regulations for the new community. However, after the Prophet's death he refrained from participating in any military expeditions and held no military or political post prior to his own caliphate, with the exception of a brief period when he was in charge of the administration in Medina.

In 656, twenty-four years after Muḥammad's death, a five-year period of civil war broke out. This Fitnah ("temptation" or "trial"), as it is called, revolved around the control of the Muslim community and the conquered territories. 'Uthmān, the third caliph, was generally disliked because of his administrative and governmental policies and his perceived favoritism toward his relatives among the Banū Umayyah. As dissatisfaction spread throughout the community, some of the rebellious groups from Egypt descended on Medina to demand change and eventually killed 'Uthmān. 'Alī, who had acted as one of the intermediaries in the negotiations between 'Uthmān and his opponents, was subsequently chosen as the fourth caliph. After considerable hesitation he accepted the nomination but was soon opposed by 'Ā'ishah, the Prophet's widow, who agitated for the immediate punishment of the rebels and unsuccessfully led an army against 'Alī at Kufa.

The victorious 'Alī made Kufa his capital and appointed his own deputies and governors. All complied with 'Alī's authority except Mu'āwiyah, 'Uthmān's kin, who refused to relinquish his post as governor of Syria. Using 'Uthmān's murder as an excuse for his political ambitions, Mu'āwiyah insisted that the group that killed 'Uthmān be punished first. This demand placed 'Alī in a delicate situation: although some punishment was required, immediate action would have further antagonized the rebellious groups and jeopardized the security of the community. Mu'āwiyah then began to portray 'Alī himself as the abettor of the fate that befell 'Uthmān, and 'Alī was forced to lead an army to Syria in order to rebuff the force that Mu'āwiyah had collected. The two parties had a skirmish at Ṣiffīn. When 'Alī's side was winning, Mu'āwiyah ordered some of his soldiers to put the Qur'ān on the tips of their lances and then called for arbitration by God's word.

Arbitrators were selected to represent both parties. However 'Alī's representative, Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī, was not very supportive of him. The resulting arbitration failed to end the conflict. In the midst of this general chaos, one faction separated from 'Alī's party. Commonly called the Khārijīs ("seceders" or "rebels"), they selected their own independent leader and, demanding egalitarian justice, fought with 'Alī at Nahrawān. Although they were defeated, their activities enhanced the power of Mu'āwiyah, who steadily gained military advantage, especially in Egypt. In 661, 'Alī was murdered by a Khārijī. His partisans named his son Ḥasan as his successor, but Ḥasan opted to retire to Medina and relinquished his succession to Mu'āwiyah. 'Alī was buried in a secret place, for fear that the Umayyads would desecrate his grave. It was not until after the end of the Umayyad rule in 750 CE that 'Alī's grave was publicly located at Najaf (near Kufa), where it remains a pilgrimage site, especially for Shī'ī Muslims.

'Alī's death jolted the community and forced widespread reflection on issues of leadership and the obligations of rulers. His memory not only came to be associated with an abstract principle but was accepted as a symbol of concrete actions, namely the virtuous path in the realm of politics. Posterity has portrayed him as pious, prestigious, and noble, ruined by the aggressive strength of brute force and treachery in which the lack of support from friends and the malice of enemies played a major role.

Sociopolitical Legacy. The political misfortune that befell 'Alī had major repercussions on the development of the sociopolitical ethos within the Muslim community. Almost from the inception of the community, varied presuppositions evolved regarding the true nature of Islam, with each ideology producing its own dialogue, philosophy, and commitment. The charismatic figure of 'Alī as Muḥammad's close companion and a hero in his own right helped to crystallize the sense of Islamic justice among his followers. This sentiment subsequently developed into a strong loyalty to 'Alī's memory, which was transferred to his descendants as well. This movement of attachment to 'Alī and his house was referred to as the *shī'ah* ("party") of 'Alī, known in English as Shiism. Believing that other Muslims had erred in their rejection of 'Alī's leadership, the Shī'ah regarded them-

selves as the best adherents to the original vision of Is-lam. Generation after generation, the Shī'ah pursued the implications of their loyalty in terms of social jus-tice, personal devotional life, metaphysics, and the whole range of human concerns. After 'Alī, the theolog-ical leadership of his partisans was passed on to his sons, notably Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, and Muḥammad al-Ḥan-afīyah (the son of one of 'Ali's later wives). Subse-quently the descendants of these sons and their adher-ents branched off into different groups.

Cultural Significance. Not only did 'Alī's life provide a sociopolitical statement but his activities and his con-nection to the Prophet were held in esteem by the com-munity as a whole and served as an example that was to be emulated. Since very early times various aspects of 'Alī's personality and actions have been celebrated. The Arabic *maghāzī* literature, for instance, recording the military feats of the Prophet and his companions, glorified 'Alī's acumen and prowess in battle. He was subsequently praised in other parts of the Muslim world as well. In this context, 'Alī's projection in popular lit-erature acts as an indicator of the esteem and reverence in which the collective Muslim community has held him. This is particularly true in poetry, where two great mystical poets, Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār (d. 1220) and Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 1273), for example, preserve for us the general sentiments toward 'Alī prevailing throughout the society. In addition didactic-mystical poets such as Abū al-Majd Majdūd Sanā'ī (d. 1131), and panegyric poets such as Abū al-Qāsim Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad 'Unṣurī (d. 1045?) and Afḍal al-Dīn Badīl Khāqānī (d. 1199) fur-ther illuminate the attitudes toward 'Alī the hero. Since the Arab 'Alī was transposed and incorporated into Muslim Persia, these Persian poets augur well as our key references, and they in turn exerted enormous influ-ence on the literature of Indian Muslim culture, for which Persian was the lingua franca for several cen-turies.

Relationship with the Prophet. A prominent theme glorified in popular and poetic literature is the strong bond of regard and friendship between 'Alī and Muḥam-mad. On numerous occasions the two of them shared burdens and supported and helped each other. From the time he was eight years old, the Prophet was raised by 'Alī's father, Abū Ṭālib, and as noted above, when Abū Ṭālib fell on hard times, Muḥammad took 'Alī into his household. When the Prophet collected his tribe and publicly announced his message, only 'Alī stood up, de-claring his support with conviction and courage and he remained loyal throughout Muḥammad's life. Thus, af-ter the emigration from Mecca to Medina, when the Prophet established a bond of brotherhood between the two groups of Muslims, making each Muslim from Me-

dina responsible for the establishment of a Muslim from Mecca, the Prophet himself did not take a brother from Medina but declared that he and 'Alī were brothers.

On numerous occasions Muḥammad extolled 'Alī's virtues and declared his love and regard for him, hence the development of the idea that Muḥammad and 'Alī came from one source and were created from the same light. 'Aṭṭār, for instance, declares in his *Ilāhī-nāmah:*

The Prophet said to him: "O light of my eyes, both of us were created from one light."
Since 'Alī is of one light with the Prophet they are as one person with no trace of duality.

('Aṭṭār, ed. Rouhani, 1960, p.23)

The close relationship of the cousins has been re-corded on numerous occasions. 'Alī, Fāṭimah, and their sons Ḥasan and Ḥusayn were declared the Prophet's family and referred to by the term *ahl al-bayt* ("people of the house"). In Persian literature, together with Mu-ḥammad, they are called Panjtan-i Pāk, "the five pure ones." That 'Alī has a special place in the community is evident from Sanā'ī's verse: "In our lane there are more than a hundred 'Alīs with beauty and glory, but the sa-gacious one does not call any of them Murtaḍā" (Sanā'ī, ed. Raẓavī, 1962, p. 21).

'Ilm. 'Alī is also applauded for his *'ilm,* knowledge and learning. An oft-quoted prophetic *ḥadīth* records: "I am the city of knowledge and 'Alī is its door." 'Aṭṭār applauds 'Alī as a sage:

How excellent the eye, the knowledge and the actions! How excellent the sun of the law, the full and swelling sea!
The breath of the Lion of God penetrated to China; because of his knowledge, musk was produced in the navel of that musk-deer.
Therefore they say: "If you are a just and pious person, from Yathrib [Medina] go to China in search for knowledge."
Leo is the navel of the house of the sun, the pure musk is from the breath of that musk-deer.
I am wrong, I speak not of the musk of Cathay, but that produced by the same-named, the Lion of God.
Were his knowledge to take the form of the sea, the Black Sea would be only a single drop in it.

('Aṭṭār, ed. Rouhani, 1960, p. 24)

During the Prophet's time, the erudition and wis-dom of 'Alī were highlighted on different occasions. The Prophet used 'Alī as a scribe at the time of the Trea-ty of Ḥudaybīyah. Later, when the ninth surah of the Qur'ān *(Repentance)* was revealed, 'Alī was chosen to read the first seven verses (twenty-nine, according to other accounts) to the pilgrims assembled at Minā. Nu-merous anecdotes narrate his wit, sagacity, and fair-ness, both during the Prophet's lifetime and after. The

first three caliphs constantly sought his advice, and 'Umar is recorded to have said, "O God, let there not be a time when 'Alī is not there and I am there." In fact, 'Umar frequently deferred to 'Alī's judgment in matters brought before him by people seeking justice.

For these reasons, 'Alī has been personified as the sage *par excellence* in the popular imagination. He is considered the originator or patron of numerous arts and sciences; thus the alchemists regard him as having endorsed their art, the calligraphers consider him to have given them some of their important techniques, and the grammarians credit him with the foundation of syntactical analysis. Not only in secular learning but especially in spiritual matters 'Alī was regarded as having special insight and knowledge. Thus he has been claimed as the master of *ta'wīl*, the esoteric interpretation of the Qur'ān and therefore of the divine law as well. Most of the Ṣūfī orders trace their spiritual *silsilah* ("chain") back to him and claim he received his own initiation and instruction from the Prophet. In panegyrics, reference to 'Alī's learning was a frequent form of praise. Thus Khāqānī eulogized 'Abū al-Fatḥ Minuchihr Shirwānshāh, saying: "You are the chosen one in the whole world, because you are like Nabī [Muḥammad] and Murtaḍā; in you is the sea of knowledge, and you are the gate of the city of knowledge" (Khāqānī, ed. 'Abbāsī and Nakha'ī, 1957, p. 373).

Generosity. Popular Islamic literature is replete with stories elucidating the special, saintly aspects of 'Alī's nature, especially his generosity. One of the most cherished narratives associated with him is the episode of the three loaves. Several versions of the story are recorded. One popular tradition records that Ḥasan and Ḥusayn had fallen ill, and 'Alī, Fāṭimah, and their servant decided to fast for three days. On the first day, at the time of breaking the fast, a beggar came to their door, and they gave away their bread. On the eve of the following two fast days as well their meager fare was given over to others who came to their door. According to some commentators, this generous gesture is commemorated in surah 76 of the Qur'ān, which begins with the words *Hal atā* ("Did he come?"). In Persian poetry, *hal atā* is frequently used as a noun to refer to 'Alī. In didactic poetry and in panegyrics, 'Alī is presented as *Ṣāḥib-i hal atā* ("master of *hal atā*"), and his generous gesture is celebrated as the embodiment of the constant Qur'anic enjoiner toward the virtues of generosity and charity. 'Aṭṭār, for example, applauds 'Alī thus:

With the thrust of his lance he conquered this world; the story of the three loaves passed into the other world.
In the mysteries of giving, he had total sincerity; and seventeen verses of the Qur'ān are especially for the three loaves.

Those three loaves were like the discs of the moon and sun, and the two worlds are seated at his table for all eternity.
('Aṭṭār, ed. Rouhani, 1960, p. 23)

Ruler-patrons were praised by reference to the attributes of the Prophet and 'Alī. For instance, Khāqānī wrote of Muwaffaq al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ghaffār: "You have a sun-like heart and Jupiter-like asceticism; your temperament is like Aḥmad and your generosity like Ḥaydar" (Khāqānī, ed. 'Abbāsī and Nakha'ī, 1957, p. 314).

Penury. Ṣūfīs regarded worldly poverty as a positive attribute and recommended the conscious attempt to ignore comfort and wealth in this life. *Faqr* ("poverty") is thus a noble quality that assists the seeker on the way to God; it ennobles through liberation from the entrapment of cravings for material wealth. Numerous Ṣūfī tales, both historical and quasi-legendary, extol the merits of indigence in this world as a means of elevation in the otherworld. This ideal of life based on poverty was ultimately derived from the Qur'ān and prophetic tradition. Like the Prophet, Fāṭimah and 'Alī are recorded as having endured tremendous material hardship. Thus 'Aṭṭār eulogizes 'Alī's penury:

So absolutely was he connected with poverty and hunger, that he was thrice divorced from gold and silver.
Though silver and gold are highly valued, they are as a calf to these people.
How could a calf ever have dared to match itself against such a lion? ('Aṭṭār, ed. Rouhani, 1960, p. 24)

In fact, 'Aṭṭār relates, 'Alī even had to hire himself out as a laborer on daily wages:

He could not bear to be being under anyone's obligation; therefore with resolution he became a hired laborer for a Jew.
Someone asked him: "Why did you do this?" He became angry and wielding his tongue like a sword replied:
"The removing of rocks from mountaintops I prefer over being obligated to people.
People tell me: 'It is shameful [to work] for a living.' But I say: 'The shame is in the baseness of begging.'" (ibid.)

Prayer life. The concept of *faqr* was related to the idea that on God's path the seeker loses his or her own self. According to the injunction of one *ḥadīth*, one ought to pray as if seeing God, or if that were not possible then at least as if one were being seen by God. It is recorded that 'Alī's absorption in prayer was such that when praying he felt no physical pain. Both Sanā'ī and 'Aṭṭār narrate a beautiful story that in a certain battle an arrow hit 'Alī in his leg and had to be removed. This surgery was done while 'Alī was praying, and he was oblivious to the pain (Sanā'ī, ed. Raẓavī, 1950, p. 140; 'Aṭṭār, ed. Rouhani, 1960, p. 24). From his prayers and

spiritual elevation, he derived a certitude that per-
meated his entire life. 'Aṭṭār says:

Whatever he said he uttered out of the sea of certainty. One
    day he openly expressed and stated:
"If the hidden was uncovered [a mystical reference to God]
    assists me, indeed, until I do not see him how can I worship
    him?"   ('Aṭṭār, ed. Rouhani, 1960, p. 24)

Bravery. 'Alī's bravery and prowess on the battlefield
are proverbial in Muslim chronicles. Numerous anec-
dotes refer to his mighty strength and quick sword. In
the realm of folklore, some accounts of his feats defy
logic, but his courage and chivalry became norms to be
emulated. He entered the battlefield and stayed there
until the battle was resolved. Sanā'ī mentions that the
back of Ḥaydar was devoid of armor. For the brave per-
son he explains, armor is required while facing the bat-
tle; when the back is to the enemy, it is better to be
killed. The man like steel is not like water, who when
armored turns around with every current of wind
(Sanā'ī, ed. Raẓavī, 1950, p. 388). Similarly, regarding
'Alī's armor, 'Aṭṭār says:

It is related that he had a coat of armor [with front], the
    back side of which was simply a window.
If his back was as exposed as his face it was because on his
    back he had the Prophet as his armor.
Once he declared: "Though they should slay me, no one shall
    see my back in battle."   ('Aṭṭār, ed. Rouhani, 1960, p. 24)

According to tradition, during the siege of Khaybar,
the Prophet specially asked for 'Alī's aid. After the Mus-
lim army had unsuccessfully endeavored to conquer the
fortress of Qamūs for several days (thirty-nine accord-
ing to some accounts), the Prophet declared that he
would install as commander a person who would defi-
nitely bring victory and who was loved by God, and 'Alī
was then put in charge. Popular literature hails 'Alī's
strength on this occasion as unmatched. For instance, it
is recorded that he was able to lift the heavy door of the
fortress, which generally needed forty people, and to
place it single-handedly across the moat. When the door
fell short by a span, he supposedly held it with his hand
until the Muslim army had passed over. The attribution
of such superhuman strength is common in the realm of
legend—as with Ulysses, Samson, or Rustam. In eastern
Muslim literature especially, the historical 'Alī, pro-
vided with supernatural attributes and as a quasi-leg-
endary figure, replaces the heroic personalities of pre-
Islamic times.

Sincerity of purpose. Total sincerity of purpose in
combat is portrayed as an essential feature of 'Alī's
strength and nobility. In the first volume of his *Math-
navī*, Rūmī describes a battle scene where 'Alī was just

about to strike his opponent down and the latter spat
on his face. At this point 'Alī put his sword aside and
refused to kill or even fight with that person, since his
fight might have been construed as being for personal
reasons rather than solely for the sake of God. The epi-
sode ends happily: the opponent was so impressed by
'Alī's sincerity that he became a Muslim in order to un-
derstand better the value system that had prompted 'Alī
to act.

Humility. Coexisting with 'Alī's elevated warrior im-
age in the popular imagination is the picture of his ex-
treme humility. It is recorded that he accepted with
pride the title of Abū Turāb ("father of dust") from the
Prophet. 'Aṭṭār reports how 'Alī once accidentally
stepped on an ant and was filled with anguish and re-
morse. He was willing to do anything to expiate this
inadvertent act and, according to 'Aṭṭār, begged forgive-
ness from the colony of ants. Such abject humility in
contrast to his might lent him a special place in popular
literature. In the Sunnī environment, his elevation,
though monumental, is still laced with plausibility, but
in the Shī'ī environment, he is projected in suprahuman
mode and is frequently depicted in semidivine terms.

Sword. The battle paraphernalia associated with 'Alī
has also been eulogized. His two-edged sword called
Dhū al-Faqār, which was given to him by the Prophet,
has been personified as an indicator of 'Alī's strength.
Popular literature abounds with descriptions of the
might of 'Alī and his sword on the battlefield. In the
genre of the *qaṣīdah* or panegyric ode, the poets fre-
quently urge their ruler-patrons to be brave like 'Alī
and to procure a keen sword like Dhū al-Faqār in order
to have a successful realm where justice and prosperity
would reign together with the name of God.

'Alī's sword was also frequently used as a symbol for
the power and sincerity of rulers. In a panegyric ode,
Sanā'ī questions his patron: "How can religion be
strong from you and your speech, if you are not 'Alī and
your tongue is not Dhū al-Faqār?" (Sanā'ī, ed. Raẓavī,
1962, p. 91). 'Unṣurī eulogizes Sultan Maḥmūd as the
epitome of perfect kingship and describes him as a par-
agon who achieves the best results in war and peace:

But with that which agitates his kingdom, do not blame him
    if he is not tranquil.
Instead of the violet, he will grip the rein; instead of the
    goblet in grip is the Dhū al-Faqār.
                                  ('Unṣurī, ed. Qarīb, 1962, p. 87)

The rein and the Dhū al-Faqār thus serve as indicators
of Maḥmūd's battle prowess and his ability to defend
his domains. The specific allusion to the sword of 'Alī
serves as a graphic indicator of Maḥmūd's entry into

the battle zone. In a similar manner 'Unṣurī writes in another poem:

> If he receives an attack, he is like a rock mountain; if he
> makes an attack he is like a spring breeze.
> At the time of treaty, [he is] the love of friendship; at
> the place of battle [he is] the sword Dhū al-Faqār.
> (ibid., p. 168)

Again the reference to Dhū al-Faqār indicates that Maḥmūd is serious when he goes into battle and by the same token is a keen enhancer of peace.

Often the poets also used the sword to describe the eloquence of their own speech, as Khāqānī remarked: "The King of the Universe, for His Majesty [the king], made a Dhū al-Faqār like 'Alī's, from the gem of my tongue" (Khāqānī, ed. 'Abbāsī and Nakha'ī, 1957, p. 137). In addition to images that have serious allusions, Dhū al-Faqār is also used in frivolous motifs. Thus in the romantic prelude of an ode to Amīr Naṣr, 'Unṣurī remarks:

> If his [the beloved's] stature taunts the summits and the
> deltas,
> Why does his coquetry create a crack in the sword Dhū
> al-Faqār? (ibid., p. 119)

Family. Fāṭimah, 'Alī's wife and the Prophet's beloved last daughter, has been glorified as the perfect woman, the symbol of purity and chastity whose example is to be emulated for all times. Referring to her as the Lady of Paradise, generations of Muslims have reverently cherished her for her simplicity, piety, gentleness, and silent suffering in adversity, and their affection is portrayed in both folk poetry and classical literature.

'Aṭṭār, like other didactic poets, portrays the Ṣūfī ideal of disregard for the comforts in life by lovingly retelling the episode of Fāṭimah's wedding to 'Alī and her simple dowry:

Usāmah relates as follows: "The master [Muḥammad]
  commanded: 'Summon Abū Bakr and 'Umar before me.'
When they were before him, he said, 'Call Zahrah [Fāṭimah]
  also.'
To her he said: 'All that you have for your dowry, I wish you
  to bring before me.
Although you are the light of my eyes, O illuminator of
  hearts, today I will bestow you to Haydar.'
That excellent one immediately brought out of the house a
  hand-mill,
An old palm-leaf mat, a toothbrush and a polished pair of
  wooden clogs.
She also brought a wooden bowl, a strong sheepskin cushion,
And a mantle with seven patches. She laid it all down for
  viewing.

The Prophet, master of one and all, hung the hand-mill on his
  neck.
Simultaneously, Abū Bakr picked up the mat, 'Umar the
  cushion, and they went off.
Then Fāṭimah, the light of the Prophet's eye, went and flung
  the old veil on her head.
She then tied the clogs on her feet and took the toothbrush in
  her hand."
Usāmah continued: "Then I took the bowl in my hand and set
  off.
When I arrived before Haydar's room, I was unable to see
  faces of people because of my tears.
The Prophet asked: 'O righteous one, why are you weeping so
  bitterly?'
I answered: 'Because of Zahrah's poverty my soul and liver
  have become stone.
He who is lord of the two worlds—so plain is his daughter's
  dowry.
See what Caesar and Chosroes possess and what worldly
  possessions the Prophet owned!'
He said to me: "O Usāmah, even this small amount is a great
  deal since we must all die.
Just as neither hand nor foot nor face nor body nor soul will
  remain, these things also will be obliterated."'
Such was the wedding of the Prophet's darling child—what
  do you expect?
You have heard how the Prophet lived—do you wish to
  amass worldly possessions?
Since the work of this world is merely to drink your blood,
  why collect together what will be a burden around your
  neck? ('Aṭṭār, ed. Rouhani, 1960, p. 217)

Legacy. The image of 'Alī as the brave warrior and perfect saint has engulfed the imagination of Muslims for centuries. His life, though difficult and at times traumatic, with adverse political fortunes, has been regarded as a beacon for the ordinary person to do what is right, regardless of the consequences. With general awe the community remembers his closeness to the Prophet and respects his brave attitude toward life. He is seen as one unwilling to compromise in matters of principle or to give preference to personal gains. These traits the community cherishes and endeavors to emulate. Though this fascination is more true in the Shī'ī context, his attraction still holds for the Sunnī world.

'Alī has been described as being not very tall but extremely strong, inclined to stoutness, with soft gray eyes, a ruddy complexion, and a flowing beard. In the realm of folklore and popular literature however, it is not his physical characteristics that have been referred to or described but, rather, his spiritual attributes and enormous strength that has been eulogized. 'Alī thus serves as the hero, an authority figure who is the symbol of perfection and who can be relied upon in times of need. In many regions where Islam spread, the

ancient heros were incorporated into the personality of 'Alī.

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HABIBEH RAHIM

'ALĪ SHĪR NAVĀ'Ī (AH 844–906/1441–1501 CE),
more fully Mīr Niẓām al-Dīn 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī; Central Asian poet, biographer, and patron of arts, letters, and Islamic institutions. Navā'ī was a man of versatile accomplishments who, born into the upper aristocracy of the city of Herat (now in Afghanistan), devoted his life to public service and the arts. Honored in the eastern Islamic world, he is regarded as the greatest classical poet of the Soviet Uzbek people and a significant contributor to Persian cultural history.

The period during which Navā'ī lived saw much political conflict owing to the disintegration of rule by the descendants of Timur (Tamerlane). Small princedoms, chiefly of Turkic origin, intrigued for domination and caused much instability among the upper classes. In Navā'ī's family, changing fortunes gave the young boy opportunities to meet a variety of scholars and mystics who shaped his intellectual and religious development. For most of his adult life he was a political and personal intimate of Sultan Ḥusayn Bāyqarā (d. 1506), who provided him with further opportunity for interaction with men of letters and led to the writing of his biographical collection, *Majālis al-nafā'is* (Gathering of Spirits), composed in Chaghatai, the eastern Turkic literary language.

During this period, Herat was not only the leading center for the arts but also a place where mysticism, and especially the Naqshbandī Ṣūfī order, flourished. Navā'ī, who has been described as a man spiritual rather than public by inclination, appears to have been an initiate into the Naqshbandī *khāngāh* (Ṣūfī hospice) headed by his friend, the great mystic poet 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 1492). Although he did not follow the ascetic path, Navā'ī never married and professed to be a dervish. Since he was a Sunnī Muslim, his lack of prejudice toward Shī'ī Muslims has led to speculation that he may have favored that sect. His friendliness toward the Shī'ah, however, probably reflects the relatively tranquil religious atmosphere of his day, particularly in contrast to the early sixteenth century, when bitter Sunnī-Shī'ī political struggles rent the natural cultural and socioeconomic relationships that had existed across the Iranian plateau.

Navā'ī's devotion to public and religious affairs is demonstrated by the fact that during his lifetime he restored and endowed about 370 mosques, *madrasah*s (Islamic colleges), caravansaries, and other pious institutions; the Mīr 'Alī Shīr Mosque in Herat was named for him. He wrote a total of twenty-nine literary works, mainly poetical, and some in imitation of mystical texts. Most of these are in Chaghatai, but a few are in Persian, under the pen name Fānī. Because of his position as an early champion of Chaghatai, Navā'ī has held a special place in modern Central Asian culture. His life story, embellished with apocryphal tales, has penetrated into the folk literature, theater, and opera of the Perso-Turkic culture of the region.

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EDEN NABY

ALKALAI, YEHUDAH BEN SHELOMOH

(1798–1878), rabbi and writer, one of the forerunners of modern Zionism. Born in Sarajevo and raised in Jerusalem, Alkalai became the rabbi of Semlin (modern-day Zemun), the capital of Serbia, in 1825. His interest in nationalism was probably sparked by the nationalist ferment in the Balkans in the wake of the Greek struggle for independence. He was also influenced by Yehudah ben Shemuʾel Bibas, the rabbi of Corfu, who was one of the earliest nineteenth-century proponents of Jewish national settlement in the Land of Israel.

Alkalai's first nationalist writing was his 1834 pamphlet *Shemaʿ Yisraʾel* (Hear O Israel), in which he called for Jews to establish colonies in the Land of Israel as the first step in the messianic redemption. Alkalai thus argued for human initiative in a process that most religious Jews considered the province of God.

He further developed this idea in his 1839 Ladino-Hebrew textbook, *Darkhei noʿam* (Paths of Peacefulness). By interpreting the word *teshuvah* ("repentance") according to its literal sense to mean "return," he turned the traditional doctrine that repentance was a necessary precondition for the messianic redemption into a requirement that the Jews first "return" to the Land of Israel.

Alkalai's nationalist thinking took on much greater urgency as a result of the Damascus Affair of 1840, when the Jews of Damascus were accused of using the blood of non-Jews for ritual purposes. Alkalai held the event to be proof that the Jews needed to regain their homeland. His first response to the Damascus Affair was the Ladino work *Shelom Yerushalayim* (The Peace of Jerusalem); it was followed in 1843 by his first Hebrew work, *Minḥat Yehudah* (The Offering of Judah), in which he developed his nationalist thinking in a more systematic way.

Traveling throughout Europe, Alkalai devoted the rest of his life to attempts to set up societies that would foster settlement in Palestine. These efforts bore little fruit. He also advocated the establishment of an international Jewish organization, which eventually came into being with the founding of the Alliance Israélite Universelle in 1860. Alkalai, however, played almost no role in the developments of the 1860s and 1870s that laid the groundwork for later Zionism. He died a forgotten figure in Jerusalem in 1878. Only after the establishment of the Zionist movement at the end of the nineteenth century was Alkalai remembered as a religious precursor to modern Jewish nationalism.

[*See also* Zionism.]

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DAVID BIALE

ALLĀH. See God, *article on* God in Islam; *see also* Attributes of God, *article on* Islamic Concepts.

ALLEN, RICHARD (1760–1831), first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.) and founder of Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church, Philadelphia. Allen, born a slave in Philadelphia, was sold as a child with his family to a slaveholder in Delaware. While there, he heard the preaching of Methodist itinerants and, following an emotional conversion, he adopted Methodism as a young man. Given the opportunity at about age twenty to purchase his freedom, he worked at odd jobs to pay the debt while simultaneously acting as an itinerant Methodist exhorter.

In February 1786 Allen returned to Philadelphia to preach to the growing black Methodist population. He was associated with predominantly white Saint George's Methodist Church in that city, which provided a base from which to gather local groups of black Methodists and offered opportunities for prayer meetings and classes. He proposed a separate black church to Methodist officials, but his idea was rejected. As an alternative, Allen developed, with co-worker Absalom Jones, the nonsectarian, benevolent Free African Society, which W. E. B. Du Bois later cited as the beginning of the Negro church in the North. In November 1787, in response to racially biased treatment, Allen and Jones led a group of black Methodists out of Saint George's in dramatic protest.

A majority of the protesters followed Jones into the Episcopal church, while a minority agreed with Allen's preference for a separate black Methodist church. Allen endorsed Methodism because of its "plain doctrine," "good discipline," and antislavery stand. The black Methodists' efforts were successful, and on 29 June 1794 Bishop Asbury dedicated Bethel Church. In 1799 Allen was ordained a deacon by Asbury—the first of his race—but was unable to participate in Methodist Conference meetings. The church became the focus of legal and personal battles over the issue of white or black Methodist control; the controversy was finally settled with the legal recognition of Bethel as an independent body in 1816.

An organizing conference of black Methodists from Baltimore, Philadelphia, and other northern localities met in Philadelphia in 1816 and elected Allen the first bishop of a racially distinct denomination, the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He was ordained an elder and consecrated as a bishop on 11 April 1816.

As bishop and minister of Mother Bethel Church, Allen supported moderate antislavery agitation, encouraged moral reform, and opposed the American Colonization Society's program for black emigration. To face the challenge of the Colonization Society, he called a meeting in Philadelphia on 15 September 1830 of leading free blacks for the purpose of formulating policy for antislavery and civil rights activities. Allen presided at what became the initial meeting of the Negro Convention Movement.

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CAROL V. R. GEORGE

ALL-FATHER. Nineteenth-century reports on southeastern Australia showed a widespread belief in a male spirit who transcended others in this part of the continent. Known by diverse names, including Baiame, Bunjil, Daramulun, Kohin, and Mungan-ngaua, he was said to live in the sky (although earlier he had been on earth). The Aborigines credited him with great achievements—laying down laws, instituting man-making ceremonies, shaping the earth, and teaching the arts of life.

The amateur anthropologist A. W. Howitt (1830–1908), who collected many of our data on the topic, saw through differences in name and detail to underlying resemblances in the various tribal conceptions and suggested that this spirit be identified by the term *All-Father*. Howitt denied the being's divinity, while others voiced the suspicion that such a spirit must reflect Christian influence on the Aborigines. The extent of the area over which beliefs in the All-Father were known made this implausible even then (although it is likely that some of the descriptions were colored by Christianity). Since the 1940s a high degree of circumstantial probability has been lent to the All-Father's authenticity by reports of an All-Mother from northern Australia. [*See* Australian Religions, *overview article.*] Evidently Aborigines have had no difficulty in conceiving of a spirit who stands above the social order in the sense of having the same relation to all persons—for obscure reasons this being is male and paternal in some regions, female and maternal in others.

Howitt's denial of the All-Father's divinity appears to have rested on the absence of worship and, perhaps more subtly, on the absence of the elevated properties ideally ascribed to the Christian God. Yet in his *Native Tribes of South-East Asia* (1904), he readily admitted the All-Father to be supernatural, and he propounded a theory of his genesis as an otherworldly embodiment of a tribal headman—"full of knowledge and tribal wisdom, and all-powerful in magic, of which he is the source, with virtues, failings and passions, such as the aborigines regard them" (pp. 500–501).

More rewarding to consider than questions of definition is the All-Father's role in Aboriginal life (in the past, that is, for the belief is almost certainly now moribund). Here we are especially indebted to Howitt and his younger contemporary Robert Hamilton Mathews (1841–1918), also an amateur anthropologist. All southeastern Aborigines knew something of the All-Father, but deeper knowledge was revealed to those who went through the man-making ceremonies. An old Theddora woman told Howitt that the spirit came down with a noise like thunder when boys were initiated. The ceremonies themselves were, for most men, the main avenue of knowledge about the All-Father. Not only were they said to have been instituted by him, but they included many symbolic references to him, and sometimes the fiction of an actual encounter with him was maintained. The Wiradthuri people's Burbung, for example, was an initiation cermony that was supposed to have been set up by the All-Father after he slew a lesser spirit who used to kill and eat some of the boys whom the All-Father took for tooth avulsion (the man-making

operation). Having put the monster's voice in the trees, the All-Father found that he could reproduce it in a bull-roarer. He told the leading men that from then on they should initiate boys and use bull-roarers. Women and children were to continue to believe that the monster destroyed the boys and then restored them to life.

The All-Father's appearance was shown by images made of him in this and other ceremonies. In a Burbung attended by Mathews in 1893 a figure of a man was molded from earth to represent the All-Father. Lying face down with arms outflung, the figure had tripped and fallen while chasing an emu he had speared. The figure was 6.6 meters long, 1.7 meters across, and 0.5 meters at the highest point. The anthropomorphic conception is also confirmed by rock engravings and by outlines cut into trees.

An even more esoteric communication between human and supernatural (one which even the most knowledgeable men seemed to regard as literal and not merely symbolic or fictional) took place in the making of magicians. It was believed in at least parts of southeastern Australia that the All-Father played an essential part in this process, which itself was a foundation of the moral and political order. Postulants appeared before the All-Father (no doubt in dream or trance state), were shown how to use quartz crystal for magical purposes, and had this and other objects "sung" into their bodies by him. A Wiradthuri man who underwent the experience described the All-Father to Howitt as "a very great old man with a long beard . . . from his shoulders extended two great quartz crystals to the sky above him" (Howitt, 1904, p. 408).

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The most important single source for the All-Father's role in magic, cosmology, and ritual is A. W. Howitt's *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia* (London, 1904). He collected many observations by others as well as recording his own. For the heated debate over the All-Father's significance and authenticity, the most accessible source is Mircea Eliade's *Australian Religions: An Introduction* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1973), which gives valuable bibliographical references to the ethnographic and polemical literature. My own work, *The Australian Aborigines: A Portrait of Their Society* (London, 1972), puts the All-Father beliefs and the associated man-making ceremonies in a wider Australian mythical and ritual context. Ernest A. Worms's "Australische eingeborenen Religionen," in Hans Nevermann, Ernest A. Worms, and Helmut Petri's *Die Religionen der Südsee und Australiens* (Stuttgart, 1968), pp. 125–322, may also be consulted with advantage, especially for its stimulating linguistic explorations.

KENNETH MADDOCK

ALL FOOLS' DAY. The first day of April, known as All Fools' Day or April Fools' Day, is traditionally marked by the custom of playing jokes (usually on friends) and engaging in frivolous activities. It stands as one of the few spring festivals in Christian Europe unaffected by the date of the celebration of Easter. All Fools' Day should not be confused with the Feast of Fools, the medieval mock-religious festival involving status reversals and parodies of the official church by low-level cathedral functionaries and others (held on or about the Feast of the Circumcision, 1 January). April Fools' Day activities, however, are related in spirit to this once-licensed kind of revelry. The actual origins of April Fools' practices and their connection to the first of April are unknown. The day and its traditions appear to reflect some of the festive characteristics of such non-Christian religious celebrations as the Hilaria of ancient Rome (25 March) and the Holī festival of India (ending 31 March). Traditional celebrations related to the vernal equinox and to the arrival of spring in the Northern Hemisphere, as well as that season's playful and often fickle weather, may also have contributed to the timing and persistence of April Fools' customs.

The development of All Fools' Day has been the subject of much popular speculation. The day has been seen as commemorating the wanderings from place to place of the raven and dove Noah sent from the ark to search for dry land after the biblical flood. It has also been thought to memorialize in an irreverent way the transfer of Jesus from the jurisdiction of one governmental or religious figure to another in the last hours before his crucifixion. In either case, the events in question were believed to have occurred on or near the first of April. An intriguing explanation for April Fools' Day customs in France, on the other hand, concerns confusion over the change in the date for the observance of the New Year. Those who recognized 25 March as the beginning of their year (a number of different dates were used to mark this occasion in medieval Europe) culminated their eight-day celebration of this event on 1 April. When in 1564 Charles IX changed the official date to 1 January, some people either resisted the change or failed to remember when the year was to begin. This confusion led to the practice of exchanging false greetings for the first of the year on the old day of its observance (1 April) and of sending false gifts, as a joke, to those who expected the customary holiday presents on that day. Thus some scholars believe that jests of all sorts soon came to be associated with this date. The term *poisson d'avril*, literally translated as "an April fish," is still used to describe the foolish victim of an All Fools' Day prank.

The custom of "April fooling," known and practiced in many European countries, was brought by English settlers to the United States of America. There, any person of any age or rank is susceptible to being made a fool on April first; tradition demands, however, that these jokes take place only within the twelve-hour period from midnight to noon (with the rest of the day reserved, no doubt, for apologies). Today, the practice is usually observed by children, although some adults continue to perpetrate both simple and complex jests and hoaxes on unsuspecting individuals on this day.

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LEONARD NORMAN PRIMIANO

ALMSGIVING. The giving of alms may be understood as arising from the deeply rooted human instinct of sympathy. Our Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon ancestors left evidence of having cared enough for the crippled and the old to provide for some of them until they died natural deaths. Almsgiving falls into a distinct category of such human responses. One encyclopedia defines *alms* as "a gift to which the recipient has no claim and for which he renders no return, made purely from pity and a desire to remove human need." Thus almsgiving would be an activity carried out for the poor, sick, and destitute (or for certain categories of religious specialists who live in elective poverty) as a matter of practice within the norms of a specific ethical perspective or religious community.

The view of almsgiving that emerges from the outlook of the modern industrialized nations, with their enormous programs of granting aid for development and to encourage alliances, appears to have reinterpreted and radically changed the tenor of traditional almsgiving. We will take note of that development, but first it will be useful to survey traditional almsgiving around the world.

Archaic Societies. The structure of archaic societies tended to maintain close ties of relationship and support among all the members of the group. The size of the community could be kept proportionate to resources by forming separate, independent bands, or by abandoning some infants or some of the sick or elderly. It may not be possible to discern almsgiving, properly speaking, until the rise of social and political groups that tolerated a degree of non-consanguine indigence. This is not to say that there is not evidence for generosity in social relations in the earlier societies, but that it expressed itself more naturally in gift giving and hospitality than in the succor of the socially unfortunate.

India. The two great religions of indigenous origin in India, Hinduism and Buddhism, developed a rather similar approach to the matter of almsgiving. Underlying the developed view of almsgiving in these traditions are the metaphysical principles of ethical behavior embodied in the related concepts of *dharma* and *karman*. Within the *varṇa* system, the upper class of brahman teachers and priests was meant to be supported by the other classes, to free them for the work of maintaining a constant memory of the sacred text of the Veda as well as of mastering the rituals and offering the essential ceremonies. This was their *dharma*, or socioreligious responsibility. Each of the other classes, even down through the numerous untouchable groups, had a distinct *dharma* in this respect, although it was uniquely the prerogative of the brahmans to receive the offerings of the whole society. Offering alms to brahmans was comparable in merit to offering gifts to the deities in their temples. Those who provided this support were given the merit of their action in the metaphysical realm as "good *karman*." This Eastern conception of a kind of "treasury of merit" to which one can make contributions for one's own benefit, particularly in future incarnations, was the metaphysical motivation for almsgiving in general.

The self-reflective motivation in almsgiving remains an issue in the discussion of the aim of charity: is the benefit, in a moral sense, to redound principally upon the giver, or does almsgiving provide a moral incentive, somehow, to the recipient? In Hindu and Buddhist terms the merit to the giver was stated in such a manner as to seem clearly to provide the principal motivation. This concept was apparent in the viability of the second group to benefit from alms in ancient India, the wandering male or female ascetics who had taken vows to renounce the world. In the ancient *varṇa-āśrama-dharma* system such an individual could no longer participate in the customary social life. The purpose of the ascetic was to become emancipated from the bondage of rebirth. The karmic lot of the laity would improve

through assistance to ascetics. We may also note that almsgiving with positive karmic consequences continues to figure in the Indian response to the indigent adults and children who earn livings through begging, and to certain other groups, such as lepers and transsexuals, who demand alms as their right.

In Buddhism the monastic order, or *saṃgha*, became the focus of the distribution of alms. The laity has provided the resources, over the millennia of Buddhist history, for monks and nuns to live without work in order to seek *nirvāṇa* within a highly structured cenobitic community. Through the redounding of good *karman* upon the donors, such laity would be given subsequent, improved opportunities (perhaps in another life) to seek *nirvāṇa*. The laity could also gain merit by succoring the indigent and suffering in humanity at large, and by showing pity toward the needs of animals. The parallel Jain practice should also be noted.

In East Asia it was thought that if one had no family to support one, there must be something wrong with oneself. Hence the Buddhist *saṃgha* in China did not attempt to institutionalize a system of almsgiving in the relationship between laity and individual monks, as was done in the Theravāda countries. As Holmes Welch points out, "The Chinese tend to look on beggars simply as men who are not being supported by their relations, presumably for some good reason, and who, therefore, deserve only the most cursory support from the rest of the community" (*The Practice of Chinese Buddhism*, Cambridge, 1967, pp. 207–208). Yet Masaharu Anesaki, in his *History of Japanese Buddhism* (Tokyo, 1963), quotes the great Buddhist saint Hōnen (twelfth century CE):

> Think in love and sympathy of any beings who have an earnest desire to be born in the land of purity; repeat Buddha's name for their sake, as if they were your parents or children, though they may dwell at any distance, even outside the cosmic system. Help those who are in need of material help in this world. Endeavor to quicken faith in anybody in whom a germ of it may be found. Deem all these deeds to be services done to Amita Buddha.   (p. 176)

Judaism. An underlying theme in the Jewish conception of charity and almsgiving is that the moral decision and moral character that respond to human need must be developed as necessary aspects of the almsgiving response. Hence, if the almsgiving is not done with a suitable moral character its value suffers varying degrees of vitiation. Maimonides (Mosheh ben Maimon, twelfth century CE), in the *Hilkhot Matvot Aniyim*, asserts that Jewish identity itself is tied up with generosity in charity. "For I have singled him out, that he may instruct his children and his descendants to keep the

way of the Lord by practicing charity" (*Gn.* 18:19). The moral tone of Maimonides' concept of almsgiving is evident in his schematization of the eight degrees of charity. In Louis Jacobs's *Jewish Law* (New York, 1968) these are listed as (1) when the giver gives to an Israelite the means to earn his own living; (2) when the giver gives and receives charity anonymously; (3) when the giver knows to whom he gives but the receiver does not know the giver; (4) when the receiver knows but not the giver; (5) when the giver gives directly but without being asked; (6) when the giver gives after having been asked; (7) when the giver gives less than he should but with a cheerful countenance; (8) when the giver gives with a sour face. Maimonides also lauds the continuing support of grown children by their parents if it is necessary for their moral well-being and, of course, the support of parents by children when necessity arises. Here the seed is sown for the relegating of family members to an externalized status so that the concept of charity (and hence almsgiving) must overcome the sense of what is one's right.

Islam. The Qur'ān gives us a complex picture of almsgiving: "A kind word with forgiveness is better than almsgiving followed by injury" (3:263). Surah 4:114 says that when we speak secretly it should be to encourage kindness and almsgiving. Surah 9:60 states specifically to whom the *zakāt* (poor tax for alms) is to be given: to the poor and needy, to those who collect the tax, and, perhaps, to recent converts to Islam, as in the example of a special gift to the people of Mecca after they converted *en masse*. The money could be used also to free captives and debtors.

There are numerous such references to almsgiving in the central scripture of Islam. The theory of almsgiving is elaborated considerably in the traditions about the Prophet, which constitute an authoritative supplement to the scriptural revelation. For example, the collection of *ḥadīth*, the *Mishkat al-Masabih*, devotes ten chapters to the subject. Therein it is stated that, as with other aspects of Islamic religious practice, the requirement of *zakāt*, which amounts to 2.5 percent given from one's goods annually (beyond a certain amount represented monetarily by the sum of 200 dirhams), is meant to train one in humanistic values. *Zakāt* leads one to learn to be less attached to personal possessions and to develop a sympathetic attitude toward the disadvantaged members of society. This disciplinary aspect of almsgiving is set in the context of Islam's disapproving attitude toward excessive economic exploitation, its prohibition of interest, and the like.

Christianity. In a fashion typical of Christianity, its modes of charity may well carry forward theory and practice from both pagan—for example, Stoic—and He-

braic sources. Christianity differs from Judaism, how-ever, in that it developed a monastic system dependent upon lay support through alms.

The Christian moral conscience developed in the well-known struggle between those who emphasized cooper-ation with God in the human quest for salvation and those who emphasized the independent, overpowering character of divine grace. A balanced view threshed out in the Pelagian controversy encouraged acts of charity and religious exercises in the pursuit of salvation, as well as dependence upon divine grace. The self-reflec-tive attitude of much of premodern Christian morality held that the moral impulse, including charity and almsgiving, earned merit—conceived in the West in rather concrete terms (namely, in its own so-called Treasury of Merit)—toward salvation or relief from suf-fering in purgatory. This was similar to the Eastern karmic theory but without the Eastern belief in reincar-nation. The doctrine of indulgences, which was to be so critical to the climactic events of the Reformation, was a reasonable development from the self-reflective moral perspective. The issue that came to the foreground in the Reformation, and that still dominates the discus-sion of charity in the modern period, is the effect of charity or alms upon the recipient—or, more specifi-cally, the question of eliminating the moral defects in the recipients of alms. Here the Calvinist influence upon the capitalist economic system might be investigated.

In the contemporary industry of charity and aid, prin-cipally in the West, efforts to make the recipients of charitable largesse morally worthy have produced un-foreseen results. Among nations, the question remains unanswered whether the exploitative tendencies of the developed countries are balanced by the rewards of "de-velopment investment" or outright charity that are dis-pensed in the mood of transforming the recipient into a morally worthy subject—that is, one who uses charity to become economically independent and productive. In this context the self-reflective attitude of premodern so-cieties toward the moral effects of almsgiving appears to have been greatly diminished.

[See also Hospitality; Charity; Merit; and Zakāt.]

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CHARLES S. J. WHITE

ALPHABETS. This article concerns lore, mystical be-liefs, and magical practices involving the alphabet and its letters in the civilizations and religious traditions that use them. The term *alphabet* generally refers to the letters of those scripts derived from the original Phoen-ician *aleph-bet* that have roughly one sign for every pho-neme. Logographic writing such as Chinese, and sylla-baries such as Japanese *katakana* and *hiragana*, Indian *devanāgarī*, and the Ethiopian *ge'ez*, are therefore ex-cluded from the following discussions, even though the last two derive ultimately from Phoenician. However, Near Eastern precursors of the alphabet, such as cunei-form and Egyptian hieroglyphics and their offshoots, will be discussed.

Origin of Writing. The beginnings of writing can be traced back to the fourth millennium BCE and earlier in Mesopotamia and the hilly country to the east and north. Subsequently the idea of writing (however differ-ent the forms it took in each area) spread eastward to the Indus Valley and China, and westward to Egypt, An-atolia, and Minoan Crete. Though the earliest uses of writing appear to have been economic—that is, the re-cording of mundane trade transactions—it quickly be-came so central to civilized life that every aspect of hu-man endeavor was written down, from the deeds of kings and priestly rituals to the most sacred myths of the people.

Myths. Soon myths evolved in literate cultures, at-tributing to gods or heroes the origin of writing and its transmission to human beings. In Mesopotamia, cradle of writing, Nabu (Nebo)—son of Marduk, king of the Babylonian pantheon—was credited with the invention of writing, which he used to record the fates of men. This notion of the function of writing, represented in the *Book of Daniel* 5:5–28 (cf. the English expressions *hand of fate* and *handwriting on the wall*), is still alive today in the Middle East and the Balkans.

According to Egyptian mythology the god Thoth dis-covered writing. This attribution is known to the West through Plato (*Phaedrus* 274c) and was accepted even by the church, as attests the floor mosaic in Siena Ca-thedral, which shows Hermes Trismegistos (Thoth) giv-ing writing to the Egyptians. Titles of this divinity in-clude *ssh* ("scribe") and *nb sshw* ("lord of writing"); he

was naturally patron of that profession. Perhaps because the pictographic appearance of the hieroglyphic script (actually a consonantal system with some logograms) facilitated the belief that word and thing were essentially identical, writing was closely linked to magic in ancient Egypt, and Thoth was the god of sorcery as well. He was reputedly the author of the Hermetic corpus (first to third century CE), which influenced Christians, Jews, and Muslims alike in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. [*See* Hermes Trismegistos.]

The Bible (*Ex.* 31:18, 32:15–16) has God himself inscribe the two stone Tablets of the Law that he gives to Moses with the "writing of God." If this is a memory of the Sinaitic script, possible ancestor of the Phoenician alphabet, Yahveh may figure here as inventor of writing. Later, the Paleo-Hebrew script acquired sanctity; some scrolls from Qumran, though written in Square Aramaic letters, write the tetragrammaton (*YHVH*) in Paleo-Hebrew. Postbiblical Jewish tradition often refers to Adam or Enoch as discoverer of the alphabet, magic, alchemy, and astrology.

In the Qur'ān also, writing is provided a divine association. God begins his revelation when Gabriel orders Muḥammad to recite from writings the angel has brought down with him from heaven (surah 96): "Recite thou! For thy Lord is the most Beneficent, / who hath taught the use of the pen— / Hath taught Man that which he knoweth not." Shanawānī (c. 1610 CE) specifically states that God created the alphabet and revealed it to Adam.

The Greeks generally did not attribute their alphabet to deities; most were well aware of its foreign, and often of its specifically Phoenician, origin. Herodotus, perhaps following Hecataeus, states that "the Phoenicians who came with Kadmos . . . introduced the Greeks to many skills and, what is more, to the alphabet, which I believe had not previously existed among the Hellenes" (5.58). While most Greeks followed Herodotus, some found the source of letters in Egypt: Anticleides names the early pharaoh Menes (first dynasty) as *heuretēs*, and Plato assigns Thoth to the same function. (Plato, who rebels against the materialism of the pre-Socratics, becomes, significantly, the first Greek to make a *daimōn* invent writing, though he tells this Egyptian tale to denigrate the invention and probably does not believe it himself.) Under Near Eastern or Egyptian influence, some Greeks attributed writing to the three Fates (cf. Nabu) or to Hermes (cf. Thoth), but these authors are Hellenistic or later.

Roots of Mystical Speculation. Mystical speculation on the alphabet and its letters stems principally from two sources. The first is the Near East and Egypt—for

magic, mainly the latter. The second is the Pythagorean tradition of Magna Graecia, where the western Greeks tended to reject Ionian rationalism.

Pythagoras founded his religious-philosophical school at Croton in southern Italy around 531 BCE. The complex system he taught gave a central place to numbers (expressed either by dots or by letters of the alphabet); these he believed to underlie the phenomenal universe. Confirming him in this conviction was his discovery that the principal intervals of the musical scale could be expressed by arithmetic ratios. From him or his school probably derives the seven-note scale that we still use today and still note after the Greek fashion with letters (A, B, C, D, E, F, G). Later thinkers connected the seven tones with the seven known "planets" (hence the expression *music of the spheres*), the seven days of the week (named for the deified "planets"), and the seven vowels of the Greek alphabet (A, E, H, I, O, Y, Ω); all these came to play an important role in magic and mysticism.

Pythagoras strongly influenced Plato, who spent much time in Syracuse with the Pythagorean Archytas of Tarentum (Taranto). Plato popularized Pythagorean ideas such as mind-body dualism and reincarnation and prepared the intellectual ground for letter and number mysticism. A generation later, the conquests of Alexander brought the Pythagorean-Platonic strain in Greek thought face to face with the philosophies and religions of the East, rife with speculation concerning writing. The subsequent Hellenistic and Roman periods are the formative eras for letter mysticism of all kinds.

Letter Mysticism. Letter mysticism includes several kinds of speculations associated with the alphabet. These conjectures are associated with the shapes of the letters; the significance of the various vowels, consonants, and syllabaries; the enigmas connected to the alphabetic system as a whole; the number of letters in the alphabet; the nexus between the letters and the constellations; alphabetic numerology; and symbolic characteristics of the letters.

Shapes of letters. Speculation about the shapes of the letters is found since very early times. In the Greek system Pythagoras himself is said to have used the upsilon (Y) to symbolize the initially similar, but ultimately radically divergent, paths of virtuous and wicked lives. Proclus in his *scholia* on Plato's *Timaeus* (3.225) therefore calls upsilon the *gramma philosophōn;* in the Middle Ages, "ad Pythagorae literae bivium pervenire" ("to come to the crossroads of Pythagoras's letter") became proverbial for "coming to a moral crux." Similarly, the psi (Ψ) on an Attic relief may represent the golden mean followed by the philosopher, who avoids the extremes on either side.

TABLE 1. *The Numerical Values of Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic Letters According to the Milesian System*

GREEK

	Letter	Name	Transliteration
1	α	alpha	a
2	β	beta	b
3	γ	gamma	g
4	δ	delta	d
5	ε	epsilon	e
6	Ϛ	digamma	w
7	ζ	zeta	z
8	η	eta	ē
9	θ	theta	th
10	ι	iota	i
20	κ	kappa	k
30	λ	lambda	l
40	μ	mu	m
50	ν	nu	n
60	ξ	xi	x
70	ο	omicron	o
80	π	pi	p
90	ϙ	qoppa	q
100	ρ	rho	r
200	σ	sigma	s
300	τ	tau	t
400	υ	upsilon	u
500	φ	phi	ph
600	χ	chi	ch
700	ψ	psi	ps
800	ω	omega	ō
900	ϡ	sampi	ts

HEBREW

	Letter	Name	Transliteration
1	א	alef	-or'
2	ב	beit	b
	ב	veit	v
3	ג	gimel	g
4	ד	dalet	d
5	ה	he'	h
6	ו	vav	v
7	ז	zayin	z
8	ח	heit	h
9	ט	teit	ṭ
10	י	yud	y
20	כ	kaf	k
	כ	khaf	kh
30	ל	lamed	l
40	מ	mem	m
50	נ	nun	n
60	ס	samekh	ˇ
70	ע	'ayin	·
80	פ	pe'	p
	פ	fe'	f
90	צ	tsadi	ts
100	ק	quf	q
200	ר	reish	r
300	שׁ	shin	sh
	שׂ	sin	ˇ
400	ת	tav	t

ARABIC

	Letter	Name	Transliteration
1	ا	alif	·
2	ب	bā'	b
400	ت	tā'	t
500	ث	thā'	th
3	ج	jīm	j
8	ح	ḥā'	h
600	خ	khā'	kh
4	د	dāl	d
700	ذ	dhāl	dh
200	ر	rā'	r
7	ز	zā'	z
60	س	sīn	s
300	ش	shīn	sh
90	ص	ṣād	ṣ
800	ض	ḍād	ḍ
9	ط	ṭā'	ṭ
900	ظ	ẓā'	ẓ
70	ع	'ayn	·
1,000	غ	ghayn	gh
80	ف	fā'	f
100	ق	qāf	q
20	ك	kāf	k
30	ل	lām	l
40	م	mīm	m
50	ن	nūn	n
5	ه	hā'	h
6	و	waw	w
10	ي	yā'	y

Epsilon (E) if turned on its back (ꟺ) resembles scales and thus represents Justice. This, too, may be ultimately Pythagorean, especially since E = 5 in the Milesian system (see table 1); it is midway between alpha (A = 1) and theta (Θ = 9) and therefore signifies balance. With this may be connected the famous Delphic E, about which Plutarch wrote an essay.

The early Christians, too, saw religious significance in the shapes of the Greek letters. Alpha (A) and delta (Δ), each with three lines, represent the Trinity. Tau (T) is recognizable as the cross, as that inveterate skeptic Lucian had already pointed out (*Letters at Law* 61). Theta (Θ) is the world—round with an equator! Thus Isidore of Seville is combining Christian with Pythagorean symbolism when he declares that five letters are mystical: AΘTYΩ (for Ω, see below).

Such speculation is also found in Jewish tradition: in the *Zohar* (part of the Qabbalah), the letter he' (ה) is called *heikhal* ("palace, temple") because its shape suggests one.

Vowels and consonants. By Alexander's time, the Ionian alphabet, with its seven vowels, had spread throughout the Greek world. Athens had adopted it in 403/2. These vowels were soon the center of much mystical speculation, in good part because they numbered seven, which also designated the seven known "planets." Vowels were thought to possess enormous power and were used on Coptic and Greek papyri from Egypt to invoke the gods. Certain combinations of vowels were deemed so potent that they could create gods. The first, middle and last characters in the vowel series, A, I, Ω, were also the first three letters of AIΩN. With iota in first position, we have IAΩ, identified with *Yahu*, short form of the all-powerful name *Yahveh*. The magical *Eighth Book of Moses* says that the name IAΩ is so mighty, God came into existence from its echo. Fuller forms are IAEΩ, IHΩYO, and IEOYΩHI (this last has all seven vowels). One repeated formula is TON IAΩ TON ΣABAΩΘ TON AΔONAI, where IAΩ, *Sabaoth* ("hosts"), and *Adonai* ("my lord") are well-known epithets of Yahveh. ΣABAΩΘ was etymologized by vowel mystics as *šaba' 'ōt* (bad Hebrew for "seven letters," i.e., the seven in the Greek alphabet). Probably A and Ω (*Rev.* 1:8f.) are meant as the first and last of all the letters, though Clement of Alexandria believes that the vowel series is meant. Given the importance of the number seven in that most mystical of New Testament books, he may be right.

The seven vowels were often equated with the seven planetary spheres; Clement of Alexandria adds that the vowels are the sounds of the planets, hence the A and Ω

of *Revelation*. When Hyginus (*Fabulae* 277) attributes the invention of the vowels to the Fates, he is thinking of the planets' role in astrological determinations of individual fates. [*See* Astrology.]

The consonants play a much smaller role in magic and mysticism than do vowels. If the seven vowels in the Greek alphabet corresponded to seven planets, then perhaps the seventeen consonants represented the twelve signs of the zodiac plus the five elements. The names of the five elements, AHP ("air"), YΔΩP ("water"), ΠYP ("fire"), AIΘHP ("ether"), and ΓH ("earth"), were spelled with exactly five consonants (ΓΔΘΠP) and five vowels (AHIYΩ).

The twenty-four letters of the Greek alphabet were assigned in pairs to the twelve signs of the zodiac (Aries: AN; Taurus: BΞ; Gemini: ΓO; etc.); these were then read as numerals and formed the basis for complex arithmetic and geometrical calculations of horoscopes.

Syllabaries. On the walls of an archaic Etruscan tomb, an inscription (IG XIV 2420) lists letters of the Greek alphabet and under them syllables consisting of a consonant plus a vowel: MA, MI, ME, MY, NA, etc. (Etruscan lacks O.) Some have seen this as an echo of Aegean syllabaries from the Bronze Age (e.g., Linear A, B), which were similarly of consonant-plus-vowel type; others consider the inscription to be a magical incantation. Certainly magic papyri from Hellenistic and Roman Egypt (e.g., Leiden Papyrus Y) use syllabaries as incantations: A, BA, ΓA, etc.; E, BE, ΓE, etc. Marcellus Empiricus (10.70) recommends such a syllabary (ΨA, ΨE, etc.) to stop bleeding. The Etruscans may have originated the magical use of syllabaries (inherited from the Aegean?); Etruscan refugees from Roman conquest could have introduced them to Egypt. (Compare the Etruscan book of rituals—and magic formulas?—found on the wrappings of the famous Zagreb Mummy.)

The whole alphabet. The number of letters in the alphabet was widely held to be significant. Early Christian writers, following Jewish originals, saw the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet as representing the twenty-two creations of God, the twenty-two books of the Old Testament, the twenty-two virtues of Christ, and the twenty-two thousand cattle of Solomon (*1 Kgs.* 8:63, *2 Chr.* 18:5). The twenty-four letters of the Greek alphabet correspond to the twenty-four hours of the day and night, which in turn are double the number of months in the year. Alexandrian scholars divided the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* into twenty-four books each, with each represented by a Greek letter. It might seem far-fetched to link this with solar symbolism, but compare the 350 cattle of Helios, the sun god (*Odyssey* 12.127–130). Al-

exander of Aphrodisias, commenting on Aristotle, suggests that the twenty-four letters express the total of the twelve signs of the zodiac, the eight spheres (seven planets plus Earth), and the four elements (excluding ether).

The close link between alphabet and cosmos is well illustrated by the semantic field of the Greek word *stoicheion;* it means "element, sound, letter of the alphabet; astrological sign; proposition in geometry; number." The Latin equivalent, *elementum,* may derive from the letter names L, M, N plus the suffix *-tum.* Everything had a name and a number, so the universe was built of letters as well as physical elements. The alphabet contained all the letters necessary to spell and utter all names, known or unknown, of all the deities in the universe, and thus to possess power over them. [*See* Names and Naming.]

Since the alphabet was endowed with such enormous power, its first and last letters could be thought of as containing and encapsulating that power. The Hebrew word אות *(ot)* means both "sign, token, divine portent" and "letter of the alphabet"; significantly, it begins with alef, first letter of the alphabet, and ends with tav, the last. The alphabet came to represent the whole universe and *ot* to signify "name of God" or "God." One magical papyrus (Leiden Papyrus 5) speaks of ΑΩΘ, "before which every god falls down and every *daimōn* cringes"; ΑΩΘ transcribes אות, while also comprising the first letter of both Hebrew and Greek alphabets (A/א) plus the last of each (Ω and Θ =   ). The statement "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end" of *Revelation* 1:8, 21:6, and 22:13 should probably be understood in this light.

Gematria, or numerology. The word *gematria,* used to allude to the numerical significance of letters, comes from the Hebrew *gematriyyah, gimatriyyah,* derived from the Greek *geōmetria* ("geometry"), mirroring the origins of this occult discipline. Though there are cuneiform parallels, the use of alphabetic signs as numerals is in origin a Greek practice. The archaic epichoric alphabet of Miletus had twenty-seven letters: the familiar twenty-four plus digamma, or wau (ϛ, representing /w/), qoppa (ϙ, representing /q/) and sampi (ϡ, or ↑, representing /ts/). It lent itself to serving as a numerical system, with A–Θ standing for 1–9, I–ϙ for 10–90, and Ρ–ϡ for 100–900. Other numbers were expressed by the additive principle: IA = 11, IB = 12, PNZ = 100 + 50 + 7 = 157; 1000 = ͵A, 2000 = ͵B, etc. (the strokes are later additions). This Milesian system became dominant in the Hellenistic period and was applied to the Hebrew, Coptic, and Arabic alphabets, even though it fit them less well, since they did not have exactly twenty-seven letters.

With this additive principle, names and words could be read as numbers. The Pythagoreans argued that every man, animal, plant, and city had its mystical number *(psēphos;* pl., *psēphoi),* which determined the course of its existence. It was a small step to identify this *psēphos* with the sum of the letter-numerals in that name or word. This system of arithmomancy spread rapidly in the Hellenistic period and plays a vital part in Egyptian and Jewish religious practice and later in Christianity and Islam.

The *psēphoi* played an important role in both religious and secular life. The *Sibylline Oracles* (8.148) predicted that Rome would last 948 years; this is the *psēphos* of ΡΩΜΗ. The great gnostic *aiōn* Abraxas may owe the exact form of his name to its *psēphos:* 365. In the second and third centuries CE, Romans identified Mithra, Persian god of light, with their Sol Invictus (Invincible Sun), patron deity of the army. Contributing to this syncretism is the *psēphos* of ΜΕΙΘΡΑΣ = 365.

Even fragments of words were added up and considered significant. Apion thought that the first two letters of the *Iliad,* ΜΗ (ΝΙΝ) = 48, represented the forty-eight total books of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* together. The gnostic Valentinus saw in the first two letters of Jesus' name, ΙΗ (ΣΟΥΣ) = 18, a reflection of the eighteen *aiōns.* The *Epistle to Barnabas* (9.8) explains the 318 servants of Abraham (*Gn.* 14:14) as the ΙΗ = 18 of ΙΗΣΟΥΣ plus Τ (the Cross) = 300.

The formulation of *isopsēphoi* (two or more words with the same numerological value) became a central numerological practice. It was believed that, should the *psēphoi* of two words be equal, the words themselves must have a similar significance. A favorite Byzantine *isopsēphos* was ΘΕΟΣ ("God") = ΑΓΑΘΟΣ ("good") = ΑΓΙΟΣ ("holy") = 284. Suetonius records a Roman political *isopsēphos,* ΝΕΡΩΝ = 1005 = ΙΔΙΑΝ ΜΗΤΕΡΑ ΑΠΕΚΤΕΙΝΕ ("killed his own mother") directed against the matricide emperor Nero. An obscene *isopsēphos* was offered by the homosexual poet Straton (second century CE): ΠΡΩΚΤΟΣ ("anus") = 1570 = ΧΡΥΣΟΣ ("gold").

To make more *isopsēphoi,* Jewish arithmomancers introduced elaborate variations. One gives each letter the sum of the Milesian values of the letters in its name (e.g., אלף = 80 + 30 + 1 = 111). Another reckons א – ט = 1–9, י – צ = 1–9, and ק – ת = 1–4; therefore י ה ו ה (Yahveh) = טוב (*tob,* "good") = 17.

No numerological mystery has held more fascination than the "number of the beast" of the Christian apocalypse. *Revelation* 13:18 exhorts the wise to "calculate [*psēphisatō*] the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man [*arithmos . . . anthrōpou*]." This can only mean that the number, 666 (616 and 646 are manuscript variants), is the *psēphos* of a man's name. *Revelation* 17:9 shows that the beast is Rome (7 heads = 7

hills), so the man must be an emperor. ΓΑΙΟΣ ΚΑΙΣΑΡ (Gaius Caesar "Caligula," 37–41 CE) fits 616 perfectly; for 666 there are several candidates. Nero's name in Greek (ΝΕΡΩΝ ΚΑΙΣΑΡ = Nero Caesar, 54–68) (mis)spelled in Hebrew נרו ו קסר totals 666 ("Caesar" should be קיסר). Titus (ΤΕΙΤΟΣ) took Jerusalem in 70 CE, destroying the Temple; identify him as a Titan, and we have TEITAN = 666. Marcus Cocceius Nerva (r. 96–98), first of the Five Good Emperors, seems an unlikely candidate for "the beast"—unless he was considered *Nero redivivus*—but M. ΝΕΡΟΥΑ and Κ(ΑΙΣΑΡ) Κ(ΟΚΚΕΙΟΣ) ΝΕΡΟΥΑ both = 666. The equation ουλπιος (for Emperor Marcus Ulpius Traianus, r. 98–117) = 666 must be rejected; it depends on final small sigma (ς) = 6, but neither -ς or ς = 6 are attested before the high Middle Ages. The true solution to this riddle has not been established, though M. ΝΕΡΟΥΑ = *Nero redivivus* fits best with the traditional date for the composition of *Revelation*.

It is noteworthy that the *psēphos* of ΙΗΣΟΥΣ is 888 = 4 × 222; 666 = 3 × 222. While 222 = 2 × 111 (cf. alef = 111 above), 3 + 4 = 7; three, four, and especially seven pervade *Revelation*. Thus the sum of the *psēphoi* of Christ and Antichrist, divided by 222, equals seven.

Later Numerological Speculation. Numerological speculation has continued to this day. [*See* Numbers.] The gnostic Marcus's complex system of numerology and other occult uses of the alphabet had wide influence in the Middle Ages, especially among Jews and Muslims. In medieval Judaism numerology flourished, and the Ḥasidim cultivate it in present times as well. Numerology also played a prominant role in medieval Islam, as for example in the *Haft Paykar* of the Persian poet Niẓāmī. When used as numbers, the Arabic letters were arranged in the traditional order (Arab., *'abjad*) familiar from Hebrew and Greek, and their values followed the Milesian system (see table 1). The usual order of the Arabic alphabet is based on sound and letter shape. In the West, a different system was used (*A* = 1, *B* = 2 . . . *Y* = 25, *Z* = 26), but psephological speculation thrived there, too. One whose destiny was influenced by it was Napoleon; long before he attained power, he discovered that BONAPART(E) = 82 = BOURBON and believed he would one day rule France.

Temurah, Acronyms, and Acrostics. The significance given to letters led to the devising of alphabetic ciphers; examples are *temurah* (simple substitution ciphers), acronyms, and acrostics.

A largely Jewish practice, *temurah* ("exchange") is found in the Bible but was most highly developed by the qabbalists. Letters of the alphabet are represented by other letters according to a definite scheme. The *'At-

baš* (אתבש) exchanges the first letter א for the last ת, the second ב for the penultimate ש, etc. The results are held significant: ש ש ז = ŠŠK, "oppressed," for בבל = BBL, "Babel" (*Jeremiah* 25:26), and לב קמ'= LB QMY, "heart of my enemy," for ם י ד ש כ = KSDYM, "Chaldaeans" (*Jeremiah* 51:1) are early and well-known examples. The variant *'Albam* switches the first letter with the twelfth (ל), the second ב with the thirteenth מ, etc. *Ziruf* or *Gilgul* involves anagrams of single words; there were, for example, twelve possible permutations (*haviyyot*) of יהוה, the tetragrammaton *YHVH*.

An acronym is a word each of whose letters is the first letters of another word; the words represented by the acronym usually form a title or phrase. Hellenistic Alexandrines thought the designations of the five districts of their city Α, Β, Γ, Δ, Ε (i.e., A, B, C, D, E, or 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) represented ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΓΕΝΟΣ ΔΙΟΣ ΕΚΤΙΣΕΝ ("Alexander, king, [of the] race of Zeus, founded [it]"). Jews saw in the sobriquet of the great liberator Yehudah ha-Makkabi (Maccabee, from Aramaic *makkabā*, "hammer," cf. Charles Martel)—spelled MKBY—an acronym of the phrase in *Exodus* 15:11 "Mi Kamokah Ba-elim, Yahveh?" ("Who among the gods is like thee, Yahveh?") The most famous acronym is the Greek word ΙΧΘΥΣ ("fish"), standing for ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΘΕΟΥ ΥΙΟΣ ΣΩΤΗΡ ("Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior"). This meaning of ΙΧΘΥΣ is probably secondary; the original idea is a reference to *Matthew* 4:19: "I shall make you fishers of men."

Acrostics begin each line or verse of a poem with the successive letters of the alphabet. The oldest examples are in *Jeremiah* 1–4, but acrostic poems occur elsewhere in the Bible and are frequent in Jewish and Christian writings throughout late antiquity and the Middle Ages.

Islamic Speculation Involving Letters. Qur'anic verses are often preceded by unexplained letters (e.g., 'alif, lām, mīm, before surah 2), a phenomenon about which there has naturally been much speculation and to which mystical meaning has often been attached. The seven letters absent from surah 1 have special sanctity and are connected with the seven major names of God, seven angels, seven kings of the *jinn*, seven days of the week, and the seven planets. Shanawānī noted that both the Bible and the Qur'ān begin with the letter *B*. A mystical thirteenth-century Ṣūfī text holds that all God's secrets are hidden in the Qur'ān, the entire meaning of which is contained in that letter, *bā'* = ﺏ (B), and, specifically, in the dot underneath it.

Offshoots of Islam carried such speculations further, particularly in Persia and Turkey. Faḍl Allāh of Astarābād (late fourteenth century), founder of the Ḥurūfī sect (from *ḥurūf*, pl. of *ḥarf*, "letter of the alphabet"), taught that God reveals himself to the world through the

thirty-two letters of the Persian alphabet; the totality of these letters—and their numerical sum—is God himself manifest. The Bektāshiyyah, a dervish order prominent in Ottoman Turkey, adopted Ḥurūfī letter mysticism as a basic tenet. In the nineteenth century, the founders of the Bahā'ī faith gave an important place to alphabet mysticism and numerology.

The importance of the alphabet to mysticism and occult science may have weakened in modern times, but alphabets remain closely associated with religion. Roman Catholic bishops still trace the alphabet on church floors during consecration rites, while Jews and Muslims adorn their temples with writings from their scriptures. Until recently, non-Arab Muslim peoples all used the Arabic alphabet for their languages, no matter how badly it suited them phonetically. Similarly, European Jews write Yiddish, a German dialect, and Ladino Spanish in Hebrew letters. Slavic peoples use Latin letters where Roman Catholic Christianity took root, but Cyrillic, a development of Byzantine Greek script, in areas where Orthodoxy triumphed. Serbo-Croatian is written in the Latin alphabet by Catholic Croats, in Cyrillic by Orthodox Serbs, and formerly with Arabic script by Bosnian Muslims. Even in a secular age, the religious associations of writing are still apparent.

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ALTAR. The English word *altar*, meaning "a raised structure on which sacrifices are offered to a deity," derives from the Latin *altare* ("altar") and may be related to *altus* ("high"). This ancient meaning has been further verified by the corresponding Classical Greek term *bōmos* (raised platform, stand, base, altar with a base," i.e., the foundation of the sacrifice). The Latin *altaria* is, in all likelihood, related to the verb *adolere* ("to worship"; originally, "to burn, to cause to go up in smoke or odor"), so that the word has come to signify a "place of fire" or "sacrificial hearth."

The Classical World and Ancient Near East. The above etymology implies both burnt offerings and incense. [*See* Sacrifice.] Nowhere—neither in ancient Greece or Rome nor anywhere else—is the altar necessarily associated with a temple. It is important to distinguish between house altars and public altars, as well as between stationary and portable altars. Both classical antiquity and the ancient Near East offer a rich variety of altars having diverse uses. Attempts at systematization have resulted in a clear understanding of the basic functions of the altar.

Greeks and Romans made careful distinctions between different altar forms: the raised altar site where sacrifices to the heavenly gods were performed; the pit (Gr., *bothros;* Lat., *mundus*) that was dug to receive the offerings to the deities of the underworld; and the level ground where gifts to the earth gods were deposited. The altar was a symbol of the unseen presence of the gods and was therefore considered a sacred spot. Used as a table, it invited the god to partake of the offering; used as a throne it bade the god take his place. The shape of the hearth reflected the transformation of the

sacrifice, through fire, into matter appropriate for the spiritual world. It also reflected the role of the hearth as the hallowed and central place both within the family and in society. [See, for example, Hestia.] The altar could also take the form of a burial mound in which the hole or duct that drained the sacrificial blood to the interred bodies within corresponded to the pit formerly used in sacrifices to the dead. Homer uses the word to mean "fireplace," indicating that burnt offerings and an ash altar had been part of the cult of the dead.

The above differentiations and functions apply to altars in general, regardless of how they were constructed or shaped within different cultures and religions: whether boulders, mounds, or piles of rocks; the stepped altars of the Akkadians and Cretans; the sacrificial tables of the Minoans; the sacred hearth of the *megaron*, the male gathering room of ancient Greece and the prototype of the temple; the retables of the Mycenaean pit or cupola graves; or the table and grave altars of the Christian cult of the dead (Fauth, 1964). In a Pawnee house, a wealth of cosmic symbols surround the buffalo skull displayed on an earthen platform—a raised place that Western scholars commonly refer to as an altar (Weltfish, 1965, pp. 63, 66f., 266; cf. Reichard, 1950, pp. xxxv, 334).

Egyptian ritual worship included both portable and stationary altars. The former had no sacred function but were simply cult accessories such as tables or stands used for holding a tray of food, an incense bowl, or a libation cup (according to the type of sacrifice involved). Such portable altars were kept in great numbers in the temple stores. Most of the extant stationary altars were used in the sun temples. These altars were surrounded by a low wall indicating the special sacred nature of their place during sun rites that were devoid of imagery. A large obelisk further underscored the importance of the place in the ancient temples dedicated to Re. Monuments of that size could only be contained in the courtyard of an ordinary temple ("the place of sacrifice"), whereas the holiest of holies, which was inside the temple and harbored the cult image, had to make do with a portable sacrificial table (Bonet, 1952, pp. 14f.).

Hinduism. The Sanskrit word *vedi* refers to "an elevated piece of ground serving as a sacrificial altar" or "a clay sacrificial altar." It is synonymous with *pīṭha* ("seat, throne"), an altar stand or pedestal with places for several idols, each backed with a *prabhāvalī*, or "halo" (Liebert, 1976, p. 334). *Vedi* may also designate a shallow trench constructed especially for offerings.

The nomadic Indo-Aryans who invaded India around 1500 BCE carried with them a portable fire altar drawn on a chariot *(ratha)* and protected by a canopy that marked the holiness of the shrine. This eternally burning fire on a rolling base was eventually replaced by fires kindled for the occasion by rubbing sticks together. In the case of domestic sacrifices, the head of the family made the fire in the home hearth *(āyatana)*. For communal offerings, a fire was made on a specially consecrated spot *(sthaṇḍila)*.

There were no temples during the Vedic period, but a sacrificial hall *(yāgaśālā)* could be erected on holy ground that had first been thoroughly leveled. It consisted of a framework of poles covered with thatching. The sacred area, which like the domestic hearth was called *āyatana*, included subsidiary enclosures and a sacrificial stake *(yūpa)* to which the victim was tied. This stake, which represented the cosmic tree, constituted an intermediate station between the divine world and life on earth. The *vedi* was constructed either inside or outside the sacrificial hall, as a mound of bricks or as a shallow pit where the sacred fires were lit. Burnt sacrifices and libations were offered to the gods who were supposed to attend the ceremonies, sitting on sacred grass *(kuśa)* spread over part of the altar or on its sides. The *vedi* was constructed so as to be narrower in the middle and was likened to a female torso with a womb (Walker, 1968, vol. 1, p. 30).

The *śrauta* sacrifice, performed by priests, was founded on Vedic *śruti* ("heard") revelation; it is the subject of much discussion, especially in *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. The practice calls for three different fire altars arranged around the *vedi*, which serves to hold oblations and sacrificial utensils not in use. The circular *gārhapatya* altar located to the west symbolizes the earth and its fire; it holds the "fire belonging to the lord of the house" that is used for preparing the sacrificial food. The quadrilateral *āhavanīya* altar to the east represents the sky with its four directions. It usually holds "the fire of offering." The semicircular *dakṣiṇā*, or southern altar, symbolizes the atmosphere between the heavens and the earth. It wards off hostile spirits and transmits the offering to the ancestors. The fire god Agni is thus present on all three altars in three different manifestations—as terrestrial, celestial, and aerial fire—uniting the three worlds on one sacred plane. The omnipresent Agni, as all gods in one, provides the link between heaven and earth by conveying the food cooked on earthly fire to the heavenly fire, the sun. [See Agni.]

All sacrificial rites are said to be included in and summed up by the stratification of the *agnicaya* (fireplace) or the *uttaravedi* (high altar) to the north with its rich symbolism. It represents the rejuvenation of the exhausted creator god Prajāpati, "the lord of offspring,"

and hence of all the cosmos, his body. The Agnicayana sacrifice recreates the cyclic rhythm of the universe: from birth or coming into being to death or annihilation, at which point life begins anew. The sacrificial ceremonies thus serve a triple purpose: at the same time they restore Prajāpati himself, the universe, and the master of the offering (yajamāna).

The fire altar in this case is constructed of five layers of bricks, 10,800 in number (one for every hour of the Hindu year). The creator god represents the year with its five seasons. The five layers also symbolize the five regions of the universe. The basic notion behind these cosmic representations is of Prajāpati himself: his hair, skin, flesh, bone, and marrow, as well as another pentad: the god's spiritual self together with the senses. The fire, taken from the āhavanīya altar to the uttaravedi, lifts the master of the offering to heaven, making him immortal. His spiritual flight is sometimes symbolized by an altar built in the shape of a flying bird. He thus manifests himself simultaneously in time, space, and creation/creator (Gonda, 1960, pp. 141, 190ff.; Hopkins, pp. 18f.).

The Agnicayana ritual may still be studied in India as a living tradition. Its principles, as manifested in the Vāstupuruṣamaṇḍala, a diagram of the incarnation of Puruṣa (Primordial Man), are found in the building symbolism of the Hindu temple (Gonda, 1960, p. 328; cf. Eliade, 1958, secs. 142, 154, 171; 1978, secs. 76ff.).

Israelite Religion and Early Judaism. The Hebrew term for altar is mizbeaḥ ("a place of sacrificial slaughter"), which is derived from zabaḥ ("to slaughter as a sacrifice"). In time, the animal slaughter came to be performed beside, not on, the altar. Other kinds of oblations offered on the altar were grain, wine, and incense. The altar sometimes served a nonsacrificial function as witness (Jos. 22:26ff.) or refuge (1 Kgs. 1:50f.) for most crimes except murder.

The altars, if not made from natural or rough-hewn rocks, were constructed from unhewn stone, earth, or metal. The tabernacle, or portable desert sanctuary of the Israelites, had a bronze-plated altar for burnt offerings in the court and a gold-plated incense altar used within the tent. Both of these altars were constructed of wood, and each was fitted with four rings and two poles for carrying. The altar for burnt offerings was hollow, like its Assyrian counterpart, to make it lighter. Both had horns on all four corners, offering refuge to anyone who grasped them.

The description of the altars in King Solomon's temple (the First Temple) is incomplete (cf. 1 Kgs. 6ff.; 2 Chr. 4:1). Two hundred years later Ahaz replaced the sacrificial altar of Solomon with a copy of a Damascene altar (2 Kgs. 16:10ff.) that resembled an Akkadian temple tower not only in its storied structure but also in references to the top as "the mountain of God."

Ezekiel's vision of the altar of the new temple may be directly modeled on that of Ahaz, unless it refers to the postexilic altar dating from 515 BCE or is a free construction. Ezekiel calls the incense altar "the table that is before the Lord" (Ez. 41:22). The Temple Scroll of the Qumran texts from the beginning of our own era contains a detailed description of the true Temple and its rites, presented as the original revelation of God to Moses that was never realized. Unfortunately, the text dealing with the altar is badly damaged (Maier, 1978, pp. 67, 76).

The function of the Israelite altar was essentially the same as in other sanctuaries of the ancient Near East but with some important differences. While sacrifices were still referred to as "the bread of your God" (Lv. 22:25) and "a pleasing odor to the Lord" (Lv. 1:17), the notion of actually feeding Yahveh was not implied. This ancient pagan idea has acquired with the passage of time a strictly metaphorical meaning, as in later references to "the Lord's table" (e.g. Mal. 1:7). Furthermore, the altars of Yahveh could be erected only in the Promised Land.

The altar itself was sanctified in extensive consecration rites culminating in a theophany described in Leviticus 9:23–24: "The glory of the Lord appeared to all the people. Fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the whole-offering and the fatty parts on the altar. And all the people saw, and they shouted and fell on their faces." When, at a later stage in history, only the name of God was believed to dwell in the sanctuary, no theophany could occur. The altar nevertheless represented the place where heaven and earth met, the place from which prayers ascended to God—even in foreign battles, provided that the worshipers turned toward the sacred land, the sacred city, and the Temple (1 Kgs. 8:44, 8:48).

The general prohibition against blood was also related to the sacrificial altar. Blood represented the life of the animal that must return to its creator. Thus the slaughter of an ox, a goat, or a sheep had to be undertaken at the altar as an offering to God, lest it be regarded merely as the taking of life (Lv. 17:3ff.; cf. Dt. 12:13ff.). The altar was the "divinely-appointed instrument of effecting expiation for taking animal life" (Milgrom and Lerner, 1971, col. 765). The sanctity of the altar forbade stepping on it and required that the priests wear breeches to cover their nakedness (Ex. 20:26, 28:42f.). Talmudic sources maintain the distinction between the sacrificial bronze altar in the Temple court and the golden incense altar in the sanctuary by referring to them as "outer" and "inner" altars.

Iron could not be used in the construction of an altar, according to rabbinical literature, since the iron sword represented disaster while the altar was a symbol of atonement and peace between Israel and God. The word *mizbeaḥ* resembles four other words meaning "removes evil decrees," "sustains," "endears," "atones." The four consonants of *mizbeaḥ* are sometimes also interpreted as the initial letters of four words meaning "forgiveness," "justification," "blessing," "life." Both the terminology and the legends associated with the altar have given rise to countless metaphors.

Abraham's binding of Isaac on the altar in the land of Moriah is considered the supreme example of self-sacrifice in obedience to God's will, and the symbol of Jewish martyrdom throughout the ages. Abraham himself was, from this point of view, the first person to prepare for martyrdom, and his offering was the last of the ten trials to which he was exposed. According to Jewish tradition, the Temple was later built on that very spot (Jacobs, 1971, cols. 480f.); hence the expression "Whoever is buried in the land of Israel is as if he were buried beneath the altar." Already in *Exodus* 25:9 and 25:40 we read of a heavenly pattern for the tabernacle and its furniture. Earlier still, the Sumerian king Gudea (fl. c. 2144–c. 2124 BCE) had built a temple in Lagash in accordance with a divinely inspired plan. Rabbinical sources have further developed this correspondence: the archangel Mikha'el, serving as high priest, is described as celebrating a heavenly rite on the altar before God, offering the souls of the saints who after death have found rest under the heavenly altar (Kohler, 1901, p. 467; cf. *Rv.* 6:9).

The Jewish table has been looked upon as a kind of altar ever since the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans. The saying "Now that there is no altar, a man's table atones for him" helps explain many of the table customs in *halakhah* (Milgrom and Lerner, 1971, cols. 767ff.).

Christianity. Paul contrasted the Christian service with the pagan sacrificial meal by stating that we cannot partake of the Lord's table and the devil's table at the same time (*1 Cor.* 10:21). He thus distinguished between pagan sacrificial altars and the table at which Christ celebrated the Last Supper with his disciples. The New Testament constitutes the dividing point between Judaism and Christianity: Christ has, once and for all, made the full and sufficient sacrifice of himself (*Heb.* 8–10). The terminology of the sacrifice is used figuratively in reference to the dedication of Christian life (*Rom.* 12:1) and to the mission of Paul himself (*Phil.* 2:17).

The early church was thus able to refer to the eucharist as *thusia*, (Gr., "sacrifice"). The table at which it was celebrated was the *thusiastērion* ("place of sacrifice"), the term for altar first used in the Septuagint.

The commonly used term among the Christians was *trapeza* ("table"). We find the term *bōmos* used throughout the Bible to designate the altars of the pagan gods (Behm, 1964–1976 p. 182).

Construction of separate rooms for the divine service was a rather late development owing to the persecutions of the first few centuries. The early Christians used portable tables that possessed no special sacred or ritual connotations for the eucharistic meals. This did not change until around 200 CE, when the altar became stationary and was sanctified by a special anointment with oil *(muron)*. Under Constantine, Christianity became first a tolerated and later a favored religion, resulting in a rapid rise in church construction.

The Western church eventually settled on the Latin term *altare* ("a raised place") since it corresponded not only to the sacrificial altars of the Temple-centered Israelite religion but also to the various non-Christian cults of the Roman world. The Christians differentiated their altars from pagan ones by using the terms *altare* and *mensa* instead of *ara*, and by referring to their altar in the singular, reserving the plural *altaria* for pagan places of sacrifice. As late as the fourth century, Christian apologists listed the specific characteristics of Christianity: there were no temples, no altars, and no sacrificial rites, that is, in the pagan sense. (see Stuiber, 1978, p. 309).

Following the adoption of the altar by the early Christian churches, its sacred nature became increasingly emphasized. It was the foundation of the elements of the Eucharist, and the special presence of Christ was expressed in the epiclesis of the eucharistic liturgy. A rich symbolism could therefore develop. The altar could be seen as a symbol of the heavenly throne or of Christ himself: the altar is made of stone, just as Christ is the cornerstone (*Mt.* 21:42). It also could be his cross or his grave. The martyr cult of the period lent yet another symbolic dimension to the altar: it was shaped like a sarcophagus, on top of which the communion table was placed. The statement in *Revelation* that the prophet sees under the altar the souls of those who were martyred for the Word legitimized the practice of incorporating relics in the altar. This latter development may be illustrated by Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome. Excavations have shown that a small funeral monument was erected on the simple earthen tomb of the apostle Peter around 150 CE. The altar in Constantine's fourth-century basilica and later the main altar of the sixteenth-century cathedral were centered on top of the original tomb. During the construction of the former, the bones of Peter were wrapped in a gold-embroidered purple cloth and deposited in a marble niche. On the wall an unknown hand has carved the following words in

fourth-century Greek: "Peter inside." An altar of this kind was also referred to as *confessio* ("witness") after the witness to the faith or the martyr buried there.

During the Middle Ages a document giving the year of dedication was often placed along with the main relic in a hollow place in the top of the altar. This was covered with a stone and referred to as a *sepulcrum* ("grave"). In conjunction with the dedication ceremony it was customary to chisel a cross in each corner and one in the middle of the stone top.

The Middle Ages added little that was new to the symbolism of the altar but rather served to reiterate and sum up the thinking of the church fathers on the subject. The greatest popular preacher of the German Middle Ages, Berthold von Regensburg (c. 1220–1272), provides a good summary of the christological interpretation:

> The altar manifests Christ. It is built of stone, anointed in a holy way; it stands in an exalted place and serves as a container for the relics of the saints. So is Christ too a rock (*1 Cor.* 10:4); anointed with the Holy Ghost (*Ps.* 44:3); the head of the whole church (*Col.* 1:18), in him the life and glory of the saints lie hidden (*Col.* 3:3). To the extent that it is sacrificed on the altar, it signifies the cross on which Christ offered himself, not only for our sins but for the sins of the whole world."   (quoted in Maurer, 1969, p. 36)

After the Reformation, with its opposition to relic worship and to the conception of the Mass as a sacrifice, it was primarily the Eucharist of the early church that came to be associated with the altar table. The reformers emphasized the importance of the true and pure preaching of the word of God, with the result that the pulpit gained a more prominent position, sometimes at the expense of the altar.

The altar also came to be relegated to a secondary role within the Roman Catholic church during the Middle Ages, when the increasingly opulent ornamentation of screens, paintings, and sculptures was introduced. This development was furthered during the Renaissance and the Baroque era, when the focus increasingly shifted to the sacramental presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

[*See also* Fire; Shrines; *and* Stones.]

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Translated from Swedish by Kjersti Board

ĀLVĀRS. The Ālvārs are a group of Hindu religious poets of South India. Their name in Tamil means "sages" or "saints." As devotees of Māl, a deity who combines attributes of the Kṛṣṇa of the *Bhagavadgītā* and earlier Purāṇas with those of Viṣṇu and Nārāyaṇa, they differ from a second, contemporary group of poets, the Śaiva Nāyanārs. Yet in other respects both groups are closely related and together must be regarded as responsible for the formation of a devotional, vernacular Hinduism.

The only reliable source on the Ālvārs is the corpus of their own poetry, which the semilegendary Nāthamuni compiled in the early tenth century CE (and which was somewhat modified in the twelfth century). This corpus is known as the *Nālāyira-divya-prabandham* (Sacred Poetic Collection of Four Thousand); "four thousand" refers to the total number of stanzas. The *Prabandham* consists of twenty-three separate works, arranged in four books (in imitation of the four Vedas), among which the *Tiruvāymoli* by "Caṭakōpaṉ" (as the poet calls himself) is the longest and most important. This compilation and the preservation of the poems were among the achievements of Śrī Vaiṣṇavism. This Viṣṇu-devoted religious movement, which was led by brahmans and oriented itself toward Brahmanical values, had its beginnings in South India during the tenth century and assumed its classic expression in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. In fact, the movement looked back upon the vernacular Ālvārs as its spiritual ancestors. Consequently, Śrī Vaiṣṇavism produced an Ālvār hagiography, institutionalizing these saints and the *Prabandham* itself, and commented and reflected on it through an enormous exegetical literature in heavily sanskritized Tamil. The poets are envisaged here as incarnations of Viṣṇu's heavenly weapons and companions many thousands of years ago, and their life stories are punctuated by miraculous events inevitably interpreted as expressions of Śrī Vaiṣṇava religious ideals and thought.

While a critical appreciation of the *Prabandham* in-dependently from the Śrī Vaiṣṇava tradition has only just begun, the picture thus revealed is very different, though no less colorful. Traditionally, twelve Ālvārs are listed, but in the *Prabandham* only eleven works bear a poet's name (yielding a total of seven different authors), while the remaining twelve works are anonymous. These seven poets provide information in their verses from which we can infer that two were brahman temple priests, Viṭṭucittaṉ (or Periyālvār in familiar Śrī Vaiṣṇava parlance) and Toṇṭaraṭippoṭi (Bhaktāṅghrireṇu); one a brahman woman, Kōtai (Āṇṭāḷ, "the lady"); two chieftains; Kulacēkaraṉ (almost certainly not the author of the *Mukundamālā*) and Kalikaṉri (Tirumaṅkai-ālvār, a "robber knight" in hagiography); one a regional landlord, Caṭakōpaṉ (Nammālvār); and one a bard, Maturakavi. According to legend, the remaining five poets were all male low-caste bards and yogins. Geographical references in the poems cover most of what is today Kerala and Tamil Nadu, along with the southern part of Andhra Pradesh. The period from the sixth to the tenth century CE is the most likely one for the composition of the poems in the *Prabandham*.

Against the background of the *bhakti yoga* as found in the *Bhagavadgītā*, that of Vedānta, Pāñcarātra, and Vaikhānasa ritualism, of earlier folk Kṛṣṇaism and sophisticated secular Tamil culture, the Ālvārs evolved a form of religion with intense emotive flavor. Māl (also known as Tirumāl, Māyōṉ, Perumāḷ, etc.), who is the object of this devotion, manifests himself on earth in three different modes. There are his mythical exploits, many of them known from stories of the classical *avatāra*s, especially the amorous Kṛṣṇa. Then there are his incarnations in the statues of numerous South Indian temples (approximately ninety-five such shrines are mentioned by the poets), and finally there is his dwelling within the hearts of his devotees. These three modes provide the emotional and intellectual stimuli that gave rise to Tamil songs and poems (which in turn were intended as further stimuli). The characteristics of eroticism and ecstatic drive, which were subdued in the terse earlier anonymous poems, reached their culmination when Nammālvār drew on Tamil secular love poetry and transformed it into a novel type of mystical literature. Later Ālvārs such as Āṇṭāḷ, Kalikaṉri, and Viṭṭucittaṉ developed this genre further and gave it new shape in the form of folk songs and children's songs. The *Prabandham* contains no systematic theology or philosophy, but its general orientation of thought is in the direction of Śrī Vaiṣṇavism. This latter school, however, had little scope for an ecstatic form of devotion. It was the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (a South Indian text of about the tenth century CE, by an unknown author) that

adopted the Āḷvār devotion and gave it a Sanskrit mold, in fact by translating or paraphrasing poems of the Āḷvārs.

Śrī Vaiṣṇavism was affected in many ways by its Āḷvār heritage; through the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, these poets also exercised an enormous influence on Hinduism generally. But the sophistication and often extreme complexity of the nonbrahman poets, and the cultivation of simpler folk genres by brahman Āḷvārs speak against any notion of them as leaders of a rebellion by the oppressed, exploited masses, or as leaders of a movement in favor of simple theistic faith and against the teachings of the Upaniṣads. The antagonism they express is directed against Buddhists and Jains, Śaivas, folk religious practices, and occasionally against a Brahmanical establishment.

[*The religious beliefs and practices associated with Āḷvār texts are discussed in* Śrī Vaiṣṇavas. *For discussion of the Śaiva counterpart to the Āḷvārs, see* Śaivism, *article on* Nāyaṉārs.]

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AMATERASU ŌMIKAMI is the supreme deity in Japanese mythology and the ancestor goddess of the imperial family. Amaterasu was born when the creator god Izanagi washed his left eye. According to the *Nihongi*, Izanagi then said, "Do thou, Amaterasu Ōmikami, rule the High Celestial Plain." The *Nihongi* further states that her grandson, Amatsuhiko Hiko-hononinigi no Mikoto, descended to the earth and that one of his descendants, Jimmu (Kamu-yamato-iwarehiko), acceded to the throne as the first emperor of Japan in 660 BCE. This explanation, however, has been challenged by modern historians because, among other things, no central government capable of controlling local leaders existed at that time.

The word *amaterasu* literally means "shining in heaven," and *ōmikami* means "great goddess." There-

fore, Chamberlain's "heaven-shining-great-august-deity" is a more accurate translation of *amaterasu ōmikami* than the more common "sun goddess." The *Nihongi* states that her earlier name was Amaterasu Ōhirume no Muchi. *Muchi* is a suffix used for a respected person or a deity. According to Origuchi, *ōhirume* means "wife of the sun," not the sun itself. In Japanese, *hi* means "spirit" as well as "sun," and *me* means "woman" as well as "wife." Some confusion has resulted from this problem of multiple meanings. It seems that originally the name of this deity meant "great spirit woman," but later the *hi* was misinterpreted as "the sun," and eventually this deity came to be called the sun goddess. While hundreds of rituals have been retained at the Ise shrine where Amaterasu has been deified, none of them is related to the sun. This fact supports the above statement that *amaterasu* did not mean "sun goddess."

No doubt the most dramatic event in Japanese mythology was Amaterasu's retreat into the Rock Cave of Heaven, precipitated by the behavior of Susano-o, her younger brother. First, he broke down the division of the rice fields laid out by Amaterasu, filled up the ditches, and strewed excrement in the palace. While she was sitting in her weaving hall overseeing the weaving of the deities' garments, he broke a hole in the roof, and through it let fall a piebald horse that he had flayed. The woman weaving the heavenly garments was so alarmed by this sight that she struck her genitals against the shuttle and died. Terrified, Amaterasu hid herself in the Rock Cave of Heaven, and the heavenly world became dark. Eight hundred myriad deities gathered to lure Amaterasu out of the cave. Among them, Ame no Uzume, a female deity, played the most important role: "She became divinely possessed, exposed her breasts, and pushed her skirtband down to her genitals. Then the heavenly world shook as the eight hundred myriad deities laughed at once." Her curiosity aroused, Amaterasu opened the door of the Rock Cave of Heaven and came out.

While the *Kojiki* states that the woman who was weaving the garments was struck in the genitals, the *Nihongi* says that Amaterasu herself was injured, without specifying how. The *Nihongi* also does not mention the details of the activities of Ame no Uzume. Probably because of Confucian influences, the editors of the *Nihongi* moderated the sexual material in the original texts. Nevertheless, the basic motif of this myth is the termination of reproduction through destruction of the female genital organs and the reappearance of the female, which suggests the resumption of reproduction. This myth would have almost certainly been accompanied by a ritual celebrating the advent of spring, the season of rebirth in nature.

Amaterasu is closely linked in Japanese mythology with mirrors. She is said to have given a precious bronze mirror to Ame no Oshiho-mimi, saying: "My child, let it be as if thou wert looking on me." This mirror, according to the *Nihongi*, was then passed from emperor to emperor as one of the Three Imperial Regalia, symbols of imperial legitimacy. Hundreds of bronze mirrors have been found at early tombs in western Japan, and the *San-kuo chih* (History of Three Kingdoms), a Chinese dynastic history, states that in 239 the Japanese queen was given one hundred mirrors because they were her favorite objects. These accounts suggest that mirrors were extremely important religious objects for the early Japanese. Early peoples, including the Japanese of ancient times, regarded mirrors with awe and often believed that the reflection in the mirror was the spirit of the person. In this way, the tradition of mirrors as objects of worship was established. It then became linked with the earlier "spirit woman" worship, and finally the mirror came to be regarded as Amaterasu herself.

[*Further discussion of deities referred to in this entry can be found in* Izanagi and Izanami *and in* Susano-o no Mikoto. *For a more general overview, see* Japanese Religion, *article on* Mythic Themes.]

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AMBEDKAR, B. R. (1891–1956), statesman, writer, reformer, and creator of a new Buddhist movement in India; member of an untouchable caste. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, affectionately known as Babasaheb, was born in Mhow (now Mahu), India, where his father was headmaster of an army normal school. A member of the untouchable caste of *mahār*s of Maharashtra, who traditionally worked as village menials, Ambedkar lived at a time when his outstanding personal capabilities, in conjunction with a strong sentiment for reform then emerging among caste Hindus and the beginnings of a movement for rights within his own caste, could effect extraordinary progress and change in the status of untouchables. In his early years he suffered prejudice in school, but was also aided in his education by caste Hindu reformers. K. A. Keluskar encouraged him in his studies when the family moved to Bombay, and gave him a copy of his book in Marathi on the life of the Buddha. Two non-brahman princes, the Gaikwad of Baroda and Shahu Chhatrapati of Kolhapur, helped finance his education, which eventually included a Ph.D. from Columbia University in New York, a D.Sc. from the University of London, and the title of barrister from Grey's Inn in London.

In 1917 Ambedkar returned to Bombay for a three-year period in the midst of his education abroad. During this time he participated in two conferences for the Depressed Classes, testified to the Government Franchise Commission on the rights of untouchables, and began a newspaper entitled *Mūknāyak* (The Voice of the Mute). All three activities—conferences to organize and inspire, attempts to use the parliamentary process for political and social rights, and educational work—were to become hallmarks of his lifelong efforts at reform. Upon his return permanently to India in 1923, Ambedkar earned a living from teaching and law but spent a major part of his energies on building a movement among untouchables and creating political and social opportunities for them, chiefly through pressure on government. He made efforts to secure religious rights such as participation in public festivals, temple entry, Vedic wedding rituals, and the wearing of the sacred thread, but these ended in 1935 when he declared that although he was born a Hindu he would not die a Hindu, and that untouchables could be free only outside the Hindu religion. Earlier, at a conference called at Mahad, a small town south of Bombay, he had burned those portions of the classic Hindu law book, the *Manusmṛti*, that condoned untouchability.

His unshakable faith in parliamentary democracy led Ambedkar to testify at every opportunity before the commissions that investigated the furthering of democratization in British India. The prominence he gained in these lengthy and sophisticated statements resulted in his being named a representative at the Round Table conferences in London in 1930 and 1931. Faced there with the demands of Muslims, Sikhs, and other minorities for separate electorates, he began to advocate separate electorates for untouchables also. This led him into direct opposition with Mohandas K. Gandhi, who fasted in prison in Poona against such separation of untouchables from the main Hindu body of voters. Al-

though the Poona Pact of 1932 brought about a compromise with Gandhi consisting of an exchange of separate electorates for more reserved seats for the Depressed Classes, Ambedkar continued to regard as a deterrent to real change Gandhi's belief in a "change of heart," rather than legal measures as a cure for untouchability. His 1945 book, *What Congress and Gandhi Have Done to the Untouchables*, indicted the Gandhian form of paternalism.

During the British governmental reforms of the mid-1930s, Ambedkar founded the Independent Labour Party in opposition to the Indian National Congress. The year 1937 brought eleven Scheduled Castes (so called because the government placed untouchable castes on a schedule to receive representation in parliamentary bodies and government employment) into the Bombay Legislative Assembly. Although Ambedkar was to found two other political parties, the Scheduled Castes Federation in 1942 and the Republican Party in 1956, he never again achieved such a large number of seats.

Ambedkar himself was able to effect legislation guaranteeing rights for untouchables as well as measures affecting all India in the appointed positions of Labour member in the viceroy's executive council (1942–1946) and as minister for law in India's first independent ministry (1947–1951). He was also chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution (1947–1948), hailed as the "modern Manu." Among the tenets of the Indian constitution is one outlawing the practice of untouchability, a tribute to the work of both Ambedkar and Gandhi.

Underlying Ambedkar's social and political work was a constant effort to educate his people. The newspapers *Bahishkrit Bhārat* (Excluded India), *Janata* (People), and *Prabuddha Bhārat* (Awakened India) succeeded *Mūknāyak* and were widely circulated in spite of an extremely low literacy rate among the Depressed Classes. A modest beginning of building hostels so that untouchable children could attend government schools in towns culminated in the People's Education Society, which opened Siddharth College in Bombay in 1946 and Milind College in Aurangabad in 1951. The society runs two dozen institutions today and in 1982 laid the foundation stone for Dr. Ambedkar College in Poona. The stress on literacy and learning also encouraged creative writing, and since Ambedkar's death the movement called Dalit Sahitya ("the literature of the oppressed") has become an important new facet of Marathi literature and has influenced a similar school of literature in Karnataka. Dalit writers pay tribute to Ambedkar as their chief inspiration and ascribe to the Buddhist conversion movement that he set in motion shortly before

his death their sense of freedom from the psychological bonds of untouchability.

Although Ambedkar's interest in Buddhism was evident all his life, he did not convert until 14 October 1956, less than two months before his death on 6 December. The ceremony, held at Nagpur, was witnessed by over half a million people, and in the conversion movement that followed, almost four million people, most of them from former untouchable castes, declared themselves Buddhists. In his talks and in his book *The Buddha and His Dhamma*, Ambedkar stressed a rational, humanitarian, egalitarian Buddhism drawn chiefly from Pali texts. Hindu beliefs and practices and any supernatural Buddhist ideas were eliminated from the Buddhism propounded by Ambedkar. He himself, however, was regarded as the savior of the untouchables and came to be held by many as a *bodhisattva*. In the years since his death, dozens of Buddhist *vihārs* (temple compounds) have been built across the face of the state of Maharashtra, and hundreds of books have been written on Buddhist faith and practice, chiefly in Marathi. The Buddhist Society of India, founded by Ambedkar in 1951, is now headed by Prakash Ambedkar, his grandson.

[*See also the biography of Gandhi.*]

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ELEANOR ZELLIOT

AMBROSE (c. 339–397), church father, bishop, theologian, and Christian saint. Ambrose is distinguished by being the first Latin church father to have been born and reared in the Christian faith. His life mirrors the social, political, and religious tensions of the Constantinian era. His fame rests largely on his work as churchman and practical administrator. A son of the praetorian prefect of Gaul, Ambrose was educated in Roman law, which he practiced as governor of Emilia-Liguria in Milan before being called to a Christian bishopric by popular demand in 374. He brought the confidence of his social class and training in Roman rhetoric to his ecclesiastical duties. Although he underwent instruction and baptism only after being named bishop, Ambrose contributed significantly to the settlement of Nicene orthodoxy, especially concerning the doctrines of Christ and the Holy Spirit, while imparting moral-ascetical instruction and vigorously defending the church's moral-spiritual authority in relations with the state. Ambrose's life, recorded by his contemporary biographer Paulinus, was one of simplicity and austerity. A popular and powerful figure in Milan, which in his time was the center of Western Roman rule, Ambrose was "court theologian" to a series of notable figures, including the emperors Valentinian I (364–375), Gratian (375–383), and Valentinian II (383–392) as well as Theodosius (379–395, sole ruler of the empire 392–395). In his political dealings Ambrose effectively appealed to Roman legal structures and symbols while invoking the symbolic and sacramental power of the new faith.

Having begun his formal theological training at age thirty-four, Ambrose produced a series of notable works that reflect his active life amid the stresses of the age. He was more a consolidator and a creative transmitter than an original intellect. His chief models were Philo Judaeus and Origen on exegetical, dogmatic, and ascetical teachings and Cicero on morals. Although an important transmission of Neoplatonic thought occurs in his sermons (which deeply impressed Augustine), his Platonizing insight is more evident in spiritual and allegorical interpretations of scripture than in strict philosophical arguments.

Major exegetical works include *Hexaemeron*, six books on the creation epic of the Old Testament; *On Paradise; On Cain and Abel; On Isaac and the Soul;* a meditation on Psalm 118; and a lengthy commentary on Luke, which arose largely from sermons. A series of works in defense of the ideal of chastity characterizes Ambrose's rigoristic moral thought in an age of rampant self-indulgence. These include *On Virginity, To Sister Marcellina on Virginity, On Widows,* and *Exhortation to Virginity*. Ambrose never worked out a formal Mariology, but he resolutely championed devotion to the Virgin Mary. His best-known moral work, *On the Duties of the Clergy* (386), is a lightly but significantly reworked moral handbook for clergy that is modeled on Cicero's *On Duties*. Much debated as a key instrument for transmission of classical Greco-Roman culture, this work is the first comprehensive ethical treatise by a Christian writer. Ambrose's main dogmatic works are *On Faith* and *On the Holy Spirit*, both of which mediate and defend Nicene orthodoxy to the Western world and mark its full victory over the Arian heresy. Two other theological writings, *On the Sacraments* and *On Penance*, arose directly from catechetical needs.

Ambrose had a large impact on his contemporaries through his person and his exercise of church office. He championed what was virtually a monastic clergy under his spiritual direction. In defending the new order of Christian life against lingering influences of a dying paganism, Ambrose was without compromise. His removal of the pagan altar of victory from the Senate house symbolizes this tendency. Ambrose's dedication to Christian primacy is also demonstrated by his sanctioning of the burning of a synagogue in Callinicum by Christians, a deed that he zealously defended when Theodosius initially required the Christians to rebuild it.

In his admiration for Cicero's *On Duties*, Ambrose assumes a place in company with Luther, Melanchthon, Hume, Kant, and Frederick the Great, all of whom recognized in Cicero's work a common, practical Stoic wisdom that lies at the heart of Western humanistic thought. This Stoicism took seriously the ability to pattern a life after one's own nature. The notion of "the fitting" *(decorum)* loomed large as an aspect of the classical virtue of moderation. Ambrose christianized clas-

sical ideals, defending the four cardinal virtues (wisdom, fortitude, and justice, in addition to moderation) and the classical "just war" theory, and he perpetuated a Ciceronic way of resolving the clash between duty and expediency by appealing to moral (in his case, biblical) examples.

Like Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory I, Ambrose is considered one of the four major doctors of the Latin-speaking church and a towering figure of the age. From 374 until his death in 397 he held undisputed sway over affairs of the Latin church through the force of his personality and his courage, as seen during the repeated crises between church and state. His most celebrated appeal to ecclesiastical interests in dealing with the state, his humbling of Theodosius when the emperor, in a fit of rage, ordered a massacre of seven thousand citizens as a reprisal for unrest in Thessalonica, echoes the Old Testament prophet Nathan's rebuke of King David. Ambrose's actions provided a momentous precedent for later church-state relations.

Church tradition remembers Ambrose as a founder of Latin hymnody. A number of well-known hymns (e.g., *Aeterne rerum conditor, Deus Creator omnium*) reflect his poetic skill and indicate something of his contribution to the life of liturgy and worship. His effectiveness in acting on practical moral concerns, as seen in the writing on duties and his sermons on behalf of the oppressed (e.g., *On Naboth*), set an enduring pattern for church engagement in public life. Whether it was Ambrose's moral concerns, his platonizing, his elevated scriptural interpretations, or his vital strength of character that led to the conversion in 387 of Augustine of Hippo cannot be easily determined. Ambrose's influence lived on in Augustine, his greatest convert and a figure who never forgot the work and example of the bishop of Milan, even while towering over his mentor intellectually.

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Frederick H. Dudden, *The Life and Times of Saint Ambrose* (Oxford, 1935). The work of Hans von Campenhausen, *Ambrosius von Mailand als Kirchenpolitiker* (Berlin, 1929), is still the formative study of Ambrose's activities as church politician; Campenhausen's vivid interpretation is restated in his biographical portrait, "Ambrose," chapter 4 of *The Fathers of the Latin Church* (London, 1964). For an account of "middle Stoic" influences and their significance in Western thought, see my "Ambrose's 'On the Duties of the Clergy': A Study of Its Setting, Content, and Significance in the Light of Its Stoic and Ciceronian Sources" (Ph.D. diss., Union Theological Seminary, 1968). Ernst Dassmann's *Die Frömmigkeit des Kirchenvaters Ambrosius von Mailand* (Münster, 1965) constitutes a well-balanced, chronologically arranged study of Ambrose's mystical theology and biblical interpretations.

RICHARD CROUTER

AMEER ALI, SYED (1849–1928), Indian Muslim historian, jurist, and politician. Ameer Ali was born in Chinsura, Bengal, a suburb of Calcutta. His family spoke Urdu, having migrated from Avadh shortly before his birth to join a small community of fellow Shī'ī Muslims of Iranian descent. Ameer Ali never had any significant contact with Bengali or substantial training in Arabic; his education was in English, supplemented with Persian and Urdu. He was also greatly influenced by Sayyid Karāmat 'Alī (1796–1876), a family friend who had written an Urdu treatise in the rationalistic Mu'tazilī tradition of Shī'ī scholasticism. After receiving degrees in law and history from Calcutta University in 1868, he went to London on a government scholarship and qualified as a barrister in 1873. From 1890 to 1904 he was a judge of the Calcutta High Court, after which he retired to England, where he served from 1909 until his death as a member of the Judicial Committee of the Royal Privy Council.

During Ameer Ali's student years in England he wrote *The Critical Examination of the Life and Teachings of Mohammad* (1872), the first version of what in three subsequent revisions was to become famous as *The Spirit of Islam*. More than an apologetic response to Christian polemics and the challenge of nineteenth-century empiricism, as in the writings of Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *The Spirit of Islam* (1922) portrays Islam as a dynamic force, the ultimate generator of "religious progress among mankind" (p. xix). Ameer Ali sees "the achievement of Mohammad in the moral world" in terms of the traditional concept of his role as last of the prophets, the culmination and synthesis of all previous religious discoveries. But he also argues that the initial revelation of Islam is a continually creative "spirit," the source of the ongoing progress of universal human un-

derstanding and moral sensibility. Ameer Ali attributes "the present stagnation of the Mussulman communities" to an unwillingness to allow the inspiration of Islam to guide private judgment, to adapt the universal teachings of the Prophet to "the necessities of this world of progress with its ever-changing social and moral phenomena" (pp. 182–183). At the same time, he insists that inspiration be constrained by rationalism and warns against "vulgar mysticism," which "unsettles the mind and weakens the foundations of society and paralyses human energy" (pp. 477–478).

As a major figure in the development of "Anglo-Muhammadan Law," that is, the adaptation of Islamic ethical and legal principles to British judicial institutions and procedures, Ameer Ali made similar arguments for a continually adaptive reading of scriptural sources in the light of "changed circumstances." On this basis he argued against polygamy and female seclusion. In making these interpretations, he claimed for himself, as well as for the non-Muslim judges of the British courts, the right to override traditional Muslim authorities.

Throughout his adult life Ameer Ali was an active political publicist and organizer on behalf of what he deemed to be a homogeneous Indian Muslim community. In 1878 he founded the National Muhammadan Association, the first All-Indian Muslim political organization, with over fifty far-flung branches. He was instrumental in formulating constitutional arrangements for separate Muslim electorates and weighted political representation, on the grounds that Muslims had once ruled India. In 1924 he joined the Aga Khan in appealing to the Turkish Republic to maintain the caliphate, an intervention that Kemal Atatürk took as sufficient grounds for its final abolition. Ameer Ali defended the Sunnī institution of the Ottoman caliphate as a "pontifical" headship of a world Muslim polity, but he remained ultimately committed to the "apostolic" Shī'ī imamate—a contrast between democratic consensus "however obtained" and those truly qualified on the basis of intrinsic superiority (see his *Mahommedan Law,* 1912 ed., vol. 1, p. 6). His strong advocacy of British rule in India and opposition to Indian nationalism, especially insofar as it consigned Muslims to minority status, were founded on similar antidemocratic principles.

Except for some minor writings in Urdu, Ameer Ali wrote in English for a British public and, only secondarily, for English-educated Muslims. Although treated with contempt by Islamic scholars, his ideas and style have played a significant part in shoring up the self-confidence of Muslims not only in South Asia but throughout the Islamic world.

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AME NO KOYANE is one of the four deities *(kami)* enshrined at Kasuga Shrine in Nara. The deities worshiped at Kasuga Shrine, who were venerated by the Fujiwara (formerly, Nakatomi) clan, include Takemikazuchi no Mikoto, Iwainushi no Mikoto (Futsunushi no Mikoto), and Ame no Koyane no Mikoto and his wife, ancestral *kami* of the Fujiwara clan.

According to a myth recorded in the *Nihonshoki,* Takemikazuchi and Iwainushi were commanded by Amaterasu Ōmikami (the sun goddess and the ancestral *kami* of Japan's imperial house) to descend from the Heavenly Plain to earth and subjugate the Japanese domain. At the descent of Ninigi no Mikoto, a grandson of the sun goddess, Ame no Koyane was directed by Amaterasu to thenceforth attend and protect her descendants *(tennō),* who were to live in the palace hall with the sacred mirror *(yata no kagami),* one of her divine regalia, and to worship it. By enshrining the four *kami* mentioned in the above myth at their clan-shrine at Kasuga, the Fujiwara attained religious authority to receive supreme political power at the imperial court.

By the end of the Heian period the divinities enshrined at Ise (Amaterasu), Hachiman (Hachiman), and Kasuga (the four deities mentioned above) Shrines came to be referred to as the "*kami* of the three shrines" *(sanja no kami)* as a sign of special respect. During the Muromachi period the "three shrine oracle" *(sanja takusen)* was popularly venerated. Ame no Koyane's prestige as a mythic figure was enhanced during the thirteenth century with the publication of the *Gukanshō,* an interpretive history of Japan by the Tendai abbot Jien, himself a member of the Fujiwara line. The *Gukanshō,* marrying certain eschatological notions found in Buddhist scripture with the myths of the founding the Japanese state, declared that during the so-called era of the True Law *(shōbō),* Amaterasu had formulated a system of government in which there was direct administration by the *tennō,* but that in the subsequent eras of human history other forms of political organization had been sanctioned by her. During the era of the Counter-

feit Law (zōbō), Amaterasu had collaborated with Ame no Koyane to create the regent-chancellor system, in which the tennō was assisted by a regent from the Fujiwara clan (the descendants of Ame no Koyane herself). For the era of the Latter Days of the Law (mappō), the Gukanshō continues, when human institutions have degenerated from their original integrity, Amaterasu consulted with Ame no Koyane and Hachiman to establish the regent-shogun system (combining the institutions of regent and shogun), in which the tennō is assisted by the regent-shogun of the Fujiwara clan, the descendants of Ame no Koyane.

Thus, until the end of World War II Ame no Koyane served as a legitimizer of the imperial system. Kasuga shrine, which honors her, was accordingly revered by the imperial house and protected by the majesty and power of the state.

[See also Japanese Religion, articles on Mythic Themes and Religious Documents; Mappō; Amaterasu Ōmikami; and the biography of Jien.]

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Translated from Japanese by Jenine Heaton

AMESHA SPENTAS. In the Zoroastrian tradition, the Amesha Spentas (Av.; MPers., Amahraspandān), or "beneficent immortals, are an important group of entities surrounding Ahura Mazdā and figuring significantly in the *Gāthās.* From one point of view, they are aspects of divinity; from another they are personifications of abstract concepts. They do not exist independently but find their *raison d'être* in a system of interrelations and correlations among themselves. Since the divine is mirrored in the corporeal world, they gradually assumed, in theological speculations, correspondences with material elements as well. This explains the later, Manichaean use of *amahraspandān* to refer to the five luminous elements: ether, wind, light, water, and fire. The collective name of the Amesha Spentas and their definiton as a set of six or seven immortals (if the two spirits Spenta Mainyu and Ahura Mazdā are included) is found in the non-Gathic Avesta, in which the adjectives *amesha* ("immortal") and *spenta* ("beneficent") are sometimes used to describe various entities. The words do not, however, occur in the *Gāthās* (Narten, 1982).

The entities positively identified as Amesha Spentas are a well-defined group: Vohu Manah ("good thought"), Asha Vahishta ("best truth"), Khshathra Vairya ("desirable power"), Spenta Ārmaiti ("beneficent devotion"), Haurvatāt ("wholeness" or "health"), and Ameretāt ("immortality" or "life"). Many of these notions are present in Vedic religion. Thus Zarathushtra (Zoroaster), in developing his doctrine, was following a tendency, already present in the older Indo-European tradition, toward the spiritualization of abstract concepts that, according to the Indo-European tripartite ideology, corresponded to functional divinities (Dumézil, 1945; Duchesne-Guillemin, 1962; Widengren, 1965; et al). Zarathushtra, however, took this tendency in a new and original direction. The *Bundahishn* (Book of Primordial Creation; ninth century CE) gives us a picture of correspondences between the Amahraspandān and the elements: cattle correspond to Vohu Manah, fire to Asha, metal to Khshathra, earth to Ārmaiti, and water and plants to Haurvatāt and Ameretāt.

Vohu Manah is simultaneously divine and human; through "good thought" man recognizes divinity and divinity indicates to man the way, the goal, and his origins. It is, then, an intermediary between the divine and the human. Asha is the Iranian equivalent of the Indian Ṛta ("truth") and personifies the cosmic, social, ritual, and moral order. Ārmaiti is man's devotion to divinity, his receptive and obedient behavior. Khshathra is the power that comes to man from his state of union (maga) with divinity—a special power used to conquer the malefic forces and establish the rule of Ahura Mazdā. Haurvatāt and Ameretāt are the drink and food of divinity (offerings are made to them of various kinds of drink and plants) and of man, for whom they represent a reward for a correctly lived life of good thoughts, good words, and good actions.

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AMITĀBHA ("immeasurable light"), or Amitāyus ("immeasurable lifespan"), are the Sanskrit names of a Buddha who in Mahāyāna Buddhism is represented as the supernatural ruler of "the Land of Bliss" (Sukhāvatī), a paradiselike world in the western part of the universe. According to the doctrine associated with his name and commonly called Amidism (from the Japanese form, Amida), he is a superhuman savior who, by the force of his "original vow," has created an ideal world into which all those who surrender to his saving power are reborn, to stay there until they reach *nirvāṇa*. In India and Central Asia, the complex of beliefs centered on Amitābha never appears to have given rise to a distinct sect within Mahāyāna Buddhism. In East Asia, however, the cult of Amitābha (Chin., O-mi-t'o; Kor., Amit'a; Jpn., Amida) eventually led to a characteristic form of popular Buddhism, especially as manifested in the various sects and movements known collectively as Pure Land (Chin., *ching-t'u*; Kor., *chongt'o*; Jpn., *jōdo*).

Origin and Early Development. The figure of Amitābha belongs wholly to the Mahāyāna tradition, for he is nowhere mentioned in the Theravāda canon. The religious lore connected with Amitābha and Sukhāvatī contains a number of elements common to Mahāyāna Buddhism as a whole: the idea that in the universe there are many regions in which "extraterrestrial" Buddhas are active; the belief that some of these Buddha worlds are regions of great beauty and spiritual bliss, as a result of the karmic merit accumulated by the Buddha in the course of past lives; and the conviction that pious believers can be reborn there to listen to his teachings. In this general context, Amitābha and his Buddha world in the west are mentioned a number of times in early Mahāyāna scriptures, where, however, he is not singled out for special worship. At the same time, the figure of Amitābha and the cult specifically rendered to him show a number of features that are so far removed from Indian Mahāyāna that several scholars have sought their origin outside India, in the northwestern borderlands where Buddhism was exposed to strong Iranian influence. There its rise was probably also stimulated by the popularity of eschatological ideas around the beginning of the common era. There was a belief that the world had degenerated to a point where man could no longer be delivered by his own effort and must rely on faith and on devotion to a powerful savior in order to be released from sin and suffering. A similar idea, that of the "last phase of the Doctrine," was to play an important role in the development of Amidism in China and Japan.

Amitābha devotionalism is based on a few rather short scriptures of two types: one concerning Amitābha's spiritual career, the glories of the western Buddha world, and the promise of rebirth in that region, the other devoted to the technique of "visualization" of Amitābha by a process of mental concentration performed before an icon that represents the Buddha in his paradise. The first Chinese translation of an Amitābha scripture dates from the first part of the third century CE. This scripture already contains the story of the Buddha Amitābha's original resolution to save all beings. A famous episode that has remained the basic theme of Amidist soteriology, this tale recounts how, many aeons ago, the monk Dharmākara, the being destined to become the Buddha Amitābha, had pronounced a series of forty-eight vows and declared that he would not realize Buddhahood unless he could fulfill all these vows by the force of his own karmic merit, to be accumulated in future lives. He vowed to create a Buddha world of unparalleled splendor and to open it to all beings who sincerely believe in his saving power and express their faith by the invocation of his holy name. With the exception of the gravest sinners, all beings may enter that realm of ethereal beauty and spiritual bliss, where even the birds sing hymns in praise of the Doctrine. Sincere faith is especially important at the moment of death: to the one who at his death surrenders to Amitābha's grace, the Buddha himself will appear, and his soul (a basically non-Buddhist notion) will be transported to Sukhāvatī, there to be born from the bud of a supernatural lotus flower. In some of these scriptures, Amitābha is already represented as forming a triad with the two powerful *bodhisattva*s who in later iconography are his constant acolytes—Avalokiteśvara (Chin., Kuan-yin, since the tenth century mostly represented as a female *bodhisattva*) and Mahāsthāmaprāpta; these two represent the two main aspects of his being, mercy and wisdom. From the late fourth century onward, the cult of Amitābha, with its characteristic features (devotional-

ism; "visualization"; beatific visions at the moment of death; invocation of the Buddha's name), is attested in Chinese sources, but it is generally combined with other Buddhist beliefs and practices. It was only in the sixth century that Pure Land Buddhism became established as a distinct religious movement.

Early Pure Land Buddhism in China. Pure Land Buddhism as founded by T'an-luan (476–542) and elaborated by Tao-ch'o (562–645) and Shan-tao (613–681) must be viewed against the background of eschatological beliefs concerning "the final phase of the Doctrine" (Chin., mo-fa; Jpn., mappō). These were widespread in sixth-century China, particularly after the severe persecution of Buddhism in the years 574–578. Mo-fa thought implied an extremely pessimistic view of society as made up of a world of sinners, a degenerate clergy, and a tyrannical government—in other words, a situation in which it was impossible to practice the Doctrine to its full extent and complexity. Instead of individual effort to reach the ideal of saintliness and enlightenment and the arduous task of studying the complicated teachings of the Buddhist scriptures, mankind needed a simple way to salvation, and if man was unable to tread it alone, the power of the Buddha's compassion would be there to help him.

The rise of Pure Land Buddhism was no doubt also stimulated by indigenous Taoist thought. Since early times, Sukhāvatī appears to have been associated with one of the Taoist terrestrial paradises, also located in the far west. This was the fabulous K'un-lun mountain where Hsi Wang Mu, the divine Queen Mother of the West, ruled over a population of immortals. [See Hsi Wang Mu.] Furthermore, both the repeated invocation of the esoteric name of a deity and the visualization of supernatural beings were well-known Taoist practices. It was no coincidence that the founder of the Pure Land movement, T'an-luan, had been deeply interested in Taoism before he became a Buddhist.

By the middle of the T'ang dynasty (eighth century), Amidism had become a powerful movement, as is attested by the popularity of Amidist literature and the innumerable icons and votive inscriptions devoted to the Buddha of the western paradise. In spite of the simplicity of its message, it attracted followers from all classes, including the cultured elite of courtiers and scholar-officials.

Later Developments in China: Ritualization and Syncretism. The basic expression of faith and devotion in Pure Land Buddhism consisted of mental concentration on Amitābha's saving power and on the mercy of the bodhisattva Kuan-yin, who in due course became as prominent as the Buddha himself. This was accompanied by the unceasing repetition of the formula "Homage to the Buddha Amitābha" (Skt., "Namo Amitābhabuddhāya"; Chin., "Na-mu O-mi-t'o-fo"; Jpn., "Namu Amida Butsu"), sometimes up to a hundred thousand times a day. However, in spite of its doctrinal simplicity, Amidism in China developed an elaborate and characteristic liturgy, with hymn singing, the chanting of spells, collective prayer, and penitential ceremonies that in many variations have continued until the present.

In iconography, Amidism gave rise to a special type of religious art that takes as its basic theme an extremely elaborate representation of Amitābha and his acolytes in the splendor of the western paradise. As may be expected, Pure Land devotionalism appealed to the lay public, and the collective activities of lay believers, both male and female, often in the form of pious societies or congregations organized for common prayer and the performance of good works, always have played an important role. Over time a tendency developed to supplement the simple message of Pure Land Buddhism with a philosophical superstructure borrowed from other, more sophisticated systems of Buddhist thought such as the "One Vehicle" doctrine of the Lotus Sutra, the esoteric symbolism of Tantric Buddhism, and Ch'an (Jpn., Zen) intuitionism. In late imperial times, Ch'an–Pure Land syncretism could be found in most Chinese monasteries. The Ch'an ideal of inner enlightenment, attained through the realization of one's own "Buddha nature," was combined with the cult of Amitābha, resulting in the beliefs that the true Pure Land is to be found within oneself and that the formula of the Holy Name can be used as a theme (Chin., kung-an; Jpn., kōan) in Ch'an meditation.

Amidism in Korea and Japan. Following the official adoption of Buddhism as the state religion by the Korean kingdom of Silla (528 CE), the various schools of Chinese Buddhism, including the Pure Land sect, were introduced into Korea, where they reached their highest development in the seventh and eighth centuries. From Korea, Amidism soon reached Japan; it is known to have been expounded at the Japanese court before the middle of the seventh century. However, as in China, Japanese Amidism only slowly became a distinct sect. As a sectarian movement, it clearly showed the characteristics of a popular, almost protestant, reaction to the more sophisticated and aristocratic doctrines and institutions of the established sects, and, once more, this reaction was largely inspired by eschatological beliefs concerning the "final stage of the Doctrine."

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the popularity of Amidism rose with the activities of popular preachers like Genshin (942–1017) and Kōya (Kūya), the "saint of the marketplace," both of whom preached the princi-

ples of "relying on the strength of the Other One" (ta-riki) and the invocation of the Sacred Name (nembutsu). In the late twelfth century the Jōdo sect was formally established by Genshin's disciple Hōnen (1133–1212), who attracted a huge following from all classes in spite of growing resistance on the part of the Buddhist establishment. In Hōnen's Pure Land devotionalism, centered on the idea that salvation can be reached by nembutsu while everything else may be left to Amitābha's saving grace, we find already the tendency toward extreme reductionism that would culminate in the True Jōdo sect (Jōdo Shinshū) founded by the great reformer Shinran (1173–1261). According to Shinran, Amitābha's "original vow" implied that salvation was open to all sincere believers. Thus not nembutsu but faith must be the basis of religious life. Man can only be redeemed by a single and total act of surrender to Amitābha's grace; the invocation of his name is not a means by which to achieve salvation, but rather a constant expression of gratitude for the gift of faith from Amitābha. Amitābha's all-embracing grace erases all distinctions, including even the distinction between "own effort" (jiriki) and "relying upon the Other One" (tariki). Shinran also stressed the fact that Amitābha is the only Buddha who should be worshiped. All other Buddhist teachings and practices are secondary, or even irrelevant. Since there must be no separation between religion and ordinary life, even the principle of celibacy is rejected. Like their founder who described his own status as being "neither priest nor layman," Shinshū priests may marry. It is in this extremely reduced and "congregational" form that Amidism has become the most widespread variety of Buddhism in Japan. At present, the Jōdo and Jōdo Shinshū sects (the latter in two main branches) together have a following of about twenty million.

[For further discussion of Amitābha and his role in the Buddhist pantheon, see Celestial Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The notion of Sukhāvatī is treated in Pure and Impure Lands. For the practice of nien-fo (nembutsu), see Nien-fo. The cultic dimensions of Amidism are generally surveyed in Worship and Cultic Life, article on Buddhist Cultic Life in East Asia. For a more detailed discussion of Pure Land Buddhism in China, see Chingt'u and the biographies of T'an-luan, Tao-ch'o, and Shan-tao. For Pure Land Buddhism in Japan, see Jōdoshū; Jōdo Shinshū; and the biographies of Kōya, Genshin, Hōnen, Ippen, and Shinran. The iconography of Amitābha is briefly reviewed in Iconography, article on Buddhist Iconography.]

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AMMA is the supreme god of the Dogon people of Mali. According to the Dogon myth of creation, Amma existed in the shape of an oval egg whose four collarbones, joined together, formed four quarters containing the four elements of earth, air, fire, and water. After one abortive attempt at creation, Amma placed a seed within himself and, by speaking seven creative words, caused the seed to vibrate and to extend itself into the image of man. Amma divided the egg into a double placenta and placed in each of them twins, a male set and a female set. These twins were direct emanations and children of Amma. However, one of the male twins, Yurugu (also known as Ogo), impatient for a female, broke through the placenta and attempted to replicate Amma's creation. Tearing away, Yurugu took a piece of the placenta, which then became the earth. Having failed to replicate creation successfully or even to find a mate, Yurugu mated with the earth, but in doing so he defiled it, for by mating with it he had mated with his mother.

Amma attempted to restore the creation by making the other male twin, Nommo, the ruler of the universe. From Nommo, Amma created four other Nommo spirits, who were the ancestors of the Dogon. The Nommo and the ancestors came down to earth on an ark that was filled with everything necessary for the successful restoration of the creation. With them came light and purifying rain, and through them Amma created all things—human beings, animals, and plants—by means of the seed that each brought down. These four pairs of Nommo gave birth to the four divisions of the Dogon and to the social life of mankind. Amma further restored the creation by transforming Yurugu into an animal, known as "pale fox," who wanders the earth look-

ing for his female counterpart. The signs of "pale fox" are left on the earth, to be interpreted by diviners, but it is Nommo who guides and directs mankind. Almost all important events in Dogon life are preceded by divination, which is the domain of Yurugu.

Thus Amma guided the universe through creation, the revolt by Yurugu, and its partial restoration by Nommo. The legacy of Yurugu's disorder—darkness, sterility, incest, and death—are balanced by the light, rain, and fertility instituted by Nommo. Yurugu thus represents the night, and to him belongs the dry and uninhabited places of the earth. Creation for the Dogon is characterized by complementarities such as male, female, and twiness. The good order of Amma's creation has its counterpart in the disordered creation of Yurugu.

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JAMES S. THAYER

AMOGHAVAJRA (705–774), known to the Chinese as Pu-k'ung or, more fully, as Pu-k'ung-chin-kang; propagator of Chen-yen Buddhism. Apparently born of a North Indian brahman family, Amoghavajra became the disciple of the Vajrayāna master Vajrabodhi at fifteen and traveled with him to Śrīvijaya and then on to China in 720. Like other Chen-yen masters, Amoghavajra is credited with wide learning in the Buddhist tradition and is thought to have especially excelled at the study of Vinaya (monastic discipline). According to one account, Amoghavajra wished to learn the "Three Mysteries" and the method of the "five divisions" of the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, but Vajrabodhi was reluctant to instruct him. Thus, Amoghavajra made plans to return to India to seek the teachings from another master, but before he could announce his plans Vajrabodhi dreamed of Amoghavajra's departure and relented. After Vajrabodhi's death in 732 Amoghavajra made a pilgrimage to India and Sri Lanka, where he made further studies in the Vajrayāna. He returned ladened with texts and spent much of his life in the Ta Hsing-shan Temple, translating and performing rites for members of the imperial family.

After the death of Vajrabodhi and his own return from India Amoghavajra set about furthering the influence of the Chen-yen school. Under the patronage of the emperor Hsüan-tsung (r. 713–756) he met with a modicum of success. But under Su-tsung (r. 756–763) and Tai-tsung (r. 763–779), Amoghavajra led the Chen-yen school to wide popularity and great power. Amoghavajra was both friend and teacher to Tai-tsung; under his patronage he established a Vajrayāna headquarters on Mount Wu-t'ai and instituted a variety of public rites for the welfare of the emperor and the state. Amoghavajra retranslated the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* (T.D. no. 865), which had been partially translated by his own teacher, Vajrabodhi. He outlined the larger *Vajroṣṇīsa*, of which the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* is the first part, in his *Shih-pa-hui chih-kuei* (Outlines of the Essentials of the Eighteen Assemblies; T.D. no. 869). Amoghavajra produced volumes of translations of Esoteric scriptures and rites as well as new Esoteric versions of old scriptures, such as the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra for Humane Kings Who Wish to Protect Their States* (T.D. no. 246). His output as a translator was second only to that of the Chinese pilgrim Hsüan-tsang (596–664). Amoghavajra's public preeminence is chronicled in a collection of his memorials to the throne and other documents, the *Piao-chih-chi* (T.D. no. 2120), assembled by his disciple Yüan-chao.

Amoghavajra was repeatedly honored by the emperor and courtiers, who built him temples and sponsored Esoteric rites. He was appointed Kuo-shih, "Teacher of the Realm," and had free access to the emperor's private chapel. He was even enfeoffed as a duke shortly before his death in 774. No monk in Chinese history, either before or since, has wielded such immense power.

Amoghavajra promoted the *Tattvasaṃgraha* as the fast way to enlightenment, but he also taught the techniques of the *Mahāvairocana Sūtra*. Indeed, it was either Amoghavajra or his immediate disciples who paired the teachings and the *maṇḍala*s of the two texts, a pairing that marks Chen-yen and its Japanese offspring, Shingon, as a distinctive branch of the Vajrayāna.

Through his astute use of Esoteric rites and "powers" (*siddhi*), Amoghavajra led the Chen-yen school to a unique position in Chinese religious history. In doing so, Amoghavajra enhanced the dimension of Vajrayāna practice both as a path to enlightenment and as the best way to promote the goals of the state. Like Śubhākarasiṃha and Vajrabodhi—and, indeed, like Padmasambhava, who later missionized Tibet—Amoghavajra sought to demonstrate that the practice of enlightenment entailed the exercise of *siddhi*, or wondrous salvific powers.

[*See also* Chen-yen *and* Mahāsiddhas.]

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CHARLES D. ORZECH

AMORAIM. The Aramaic word *amora'im* (sg., *amora'*), meaning "speakers," generally refers to those masters who in explaining and applying the earlier teachings of the Palestinian tannaim (c. 70–200 CE) contained in the Mishnah (and in its related collections, such as the Tosefta), made rabbinic Judaism into a wider social movement. Occasionally the term may denote the individual who repeated a rabbi's statement. The significance of the amoraim lies in what they accomplished in their own day and in the impact on later generations of Jews of the collection of their teachings in the *gemara'* (which combined with the Mishnah is the Talmud) and in the Midrash.

The amoraim are conventionally divided into generations demarcated by the life span of several prominent teachers: three to five generations of Babylonian and Palestinian masters (c. 220–375) and two or three longer additional Babylonian generations (375–460/500). Recently scholars have suggested that Ashi (375–424/7) should be considered the last of the amoraim proper, after whom (to 500) flourished those authorities who generally taught anonymously. Following the enumeration of Moshe Beer (*Amora'ei Bavel*, Ramat Gan, 1974), the amoraim cited in the two Talmuds number 773 masters: 371 in Palestine and 402 in Babylonia, or 74 masters per generation in Palestine and 57 in Babylonia with a generation spanning approximately thirty-one to thirty-five years. Hardly a mass movement in their own right, they formed an elite group that was able to influence Jewry at large.

According to Jacob Neusner (1966–1970) and David M. Goodblatt (1975), the amoraim, aided by a band of students, eventually transformed Jewish society by presenting the ideal that all should become rabbis, masters of God's Torah, which contains the key to health and happiness. Their devotion to Torah study brought them great respect, and since they were believed to be able to help the common folk and intercede with God, they were seen as holy men. Their influence was reinforced by their roles as judges and community administrators, especially in Babylonia, as collectors of charity, and as teachers who were responsive, for example, to the social and economic crisis that affected the third-century eastern Mediterranean Roman world. [*See* Rabbinic Judaism in Late Antiquity.]

The amoraim continued as a group longer in Babylonia than in Palestine, expanding and redacting the Babylonian *gemara'* into the fifth century, at a time when their rabbinical colleagues in Palestine, where the Jerusalem Talmud was already closed, were apparently primarily engaged in transmitting and redacting Midrashic teachings and possibly developing practical halakhic guides. Thus the amoraim creatively applied the scriptural and tannaitic tradition to differing Babylonian and Palestinian post-Mishnaic contexts—one a pagan Persian world and the other a pagan and then Christian Roman world, the one in the Diaspora and the other in the Holy Land. Although still valuing cultic notions, amoraim in both lands were able to dissociate ideas and institutions from the Temple; for example, separating features of the Passover evening celebration from its origins as a sacrificial ritual meal, they emphasized the symbolic significance of the protocol especially in terms of freedom and liberation. A comparable variation is discernible in the attempts to bolster the practice of saying blessings before eating food with the argument that the omission of a blessing constitutes a sin. While the tannaim, by drawing on the idea of trespass against the Temple cult, suggested that the individual would be performing the sin of sacrilege against the Lord, the amoraim first defined the terms so that they might be meaningful to those who had not experienced the Temple cult and then revised the metaphors, speaking of robbing the Holy One and the congregation of Israel (B.T., *Ber.* 35a–b). Responsive to the nation's political situation, the amoraim amplified traditional redemptive motifs, though they held that these hopes for divine intervention were contingent on human deeds. They thus asserted that the divine redemption celebrated during Passover took place because the people had merited it and thereby taught contemporary Jews awaiting an eventual redemption that they too must become worthy.

The emphasis on the study of Torah and on the importance of personal action and fulfillment of the commandments caused the amoraim to stress love of one's neighbor and the importance of law, order, and justice. Likewise, in responding to contemporary intellectual challenges, they drew on, yet transformed, many Hellenistic ideas, such as those concerning astrology and notions of an afterlife, and customs, such as in popular modes of taking oaths and vows. To be sure, rabbis differed on small and sometimes larger matters, but since rabbinic teachings were constantly revised in the process of transmission to make them address more di-

rectly whatever contemporary issue seemed most pressing, their original nuances often became obfuscated. Because the teachings were given a literary framework when woven together and fashioned into the larger whole of the *gemara'*, they appeared to form part of a collective effort.

The recent advances in the efforts of Talmudic criticism to unravel what happened to the teachings during the processes of transmission and redaction (e.g., of David Weiss Halivni) should enable us more accurately to recognize the fundamental form of a teaching and the meanings it gained in subsequent generations. This should further enable scholars to analyze the distinct amoraic approaches and thus surpass the important though highly selective earlier work of scholars from Wilhelm Bacher to E. E. Urbach.

The amoraic heritage came to be transmitted through the text of the Talmud: because the Talmud became the central book of study in later Judaism, its literary and methodological traits rival its substantive content in importance. The Talmud's process of inquiry inculcates a critical intellectual approach that uses the mind to evaluate the significance and appropriateness of ideas. This outlook characterizes Torah study as an encounter with the divine—an act of ongoing revelation—so that reason, reflection, and rational discourse are the means both to approach life and to imitate God, hence to become holy. Amoraic biblical exposition, or *midrash*, which makes use of the imaginative faculty, also inculcates these traits, for even interpretations and homilies are grounded in scripture and must often withstand a process of questioning and challenge. Both the Talmudic and the Midrashic literature inculcated later generations with the value of study and critical thinking, supplementing the substantive rabbinic teachings on human action, social order, compassion, and justice.

[*See also* Talmud; Midrash and Aggadah; *and the biographies of the following amoraim: Abbahu, Abbaye, Ashi, El'azar ben Pedat, Huna', Rabbah bar Naḥmani, Rav, Rava', Shemu'el the Amora, Shim'on ben Laqish, Yehoshu'a ben Levi, Yehudah bar Yeḥezqe'l, and Yoḥanan bar Nappaha'.*]

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BARUCH M. BOKSER

AMOS (fl. eighth century BCE) is considered the first classical prophet, the first whose words are preserved in writing, the biblical *Book of Amos*. Whereas other books of the Hebrew Bible such as *Samuel* and *Kings* contain numerous indirect prose reports of earlier prophets' activities, the books of the classical prophets, beginning with Amos, focus on the prophet's words, usually recorded in poetic form.

As a rule, the early prophets addressed a specific person, often the king himself, while the classical prophets addressed a wide audience. Hence they were not merely God's messengers but also speakers, or orators. The call for justice, which earlier had been directed primarily toward the king (by Nathan to David, by Elijah to Ahab) was now directed toward the rulers and the social elite and was in the form of a public address. It has been suggested that the development of this prophetic oratorical style is connected with the Assyrians' use of propaganda (see Rabshakeh's speech in *2 Kings* 18:28–35 [citations herein follow the English version]).

Historical Context. As the superscription to the *Book of Amos* (1:1) reveals, Amos prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II (787/6–747/6 BCE). The superscription also states that he was active "two years before the earthquake" (see also *Zec.* 14:5), which, by means of the archaeological evidence at Hazor, has been dated to 760 BCE. Jeroboam's forty-year reign was a period of political stability, military success, and economic prosperity. The biblical historiographer (*2 Kgs.* 14:23–29; cf. *2 Kgs.* 13:24–25) reports on Jeroboam's territorial expansions and the strength of his kingdom.

Nevertheless, this period of prosperity had apparently created severe social tensions. Although the social elite, who prospered, were content, the people of the land, the small farmers, suffered greatly from the upper classes' pursuit of luxury (for the social structure, see *2 Kings* 24:14). It may be that the sudden increase in the stan-

dard of living resulted in greater taxation, which led to further oppression of the poor, who then became even poorer (see *Am*. 1:6–7a, 3:9, 4:1–2, 5:11, 6:4–6, 8:4–6).

Amos's Background and Message. The social inequities and oppression of the time precipitated Amos's protest and call for justice. The prophet's concern, however, was not merely social injustice but religious practice as well. Amos saw the religious practices of the elite as mirroring their perpetuation of social injustice, as indicated in his accusation in 2:7–8, and he labels the religious behavior of the leaders meaningless (4:4ff., 5:4–6, 5:21–27, 8:10).

The question arises: what does Amos's sharp criticism of the cult and its ritual mean? Does he intend to deny the efficacy of cultic worship? Is he opposed to the cult of specific shrines, such as Bethel and Gilgal? Is he calling for another type of worship (cf. 5:16)? In responding to these questions, scholars have intensively investigated Amos's social background. Who was he? The superscription refers to him as one of the *noqdim*, "shepherds" (sg. *noqed*), and this remark is echoed (though in another term, *boqer*) in 7:14. But in the Bible *noqed* does not refer to a simple shepherd; Mesha, king of Moab, bore the same title (*2 Kgs*. 3:4). Attention has been called to a Ugaritic text in which *nqd* is parallel to *khn* ("priest"), which may suggest that Amos himself was from a priestly family.

Amos definitely does not repudiate the cult, but calls for his audience to approach God. In his vision in 9:1, Amos reports that "I saw my Lord standing by the altar" (JPS). That is, God revealed himself to the prophet in the cultic center that is God's house. Amos's repeated reproach, "yet you did not return to Me" (*Am*. 4:6, 4:8, 4:10, 4:11) and his demand to "seek Me" (5:4, 5:14), which has a cultic connotation (cf. *1 Sm*. 9:9), may be understood as a call for purification of the worship. It can also be argued that Amos felt that the cultic centers of Bethel and Gilgal should cease to function as God's temples because their worshipers had demonstrated their insincerity through their pursuit of luxury and pleasure. Thus, Amos does not call for totally abstract worship and does not oppose the cult in principle. He harshly criticizes, however, the shrines that legitimate social oppression and thus the existence of religious hypocrisy.

Furthermore, the leaders toward whom Amos directs his criticism seem to be devoted worshipers (8:5). We may assume that the political and economic success of the state was taken by the ruling class as a sign of God's protection of Israel. In essence, the cult that assured its worshipers of the stability of their way of life served as religious protection for the social elite. Amos attacks this self-serving belief, pointing out that daily deeds and social justice are inseparable from the cult and, in fact, dominate God's demands of his worshipers.

Amos attacks as well the common belief that God's function is merely to save and protect his people. There was an expectation that there would be a sign, by means of revelation, of God's victories over Israel's enemies. Amos rejects this and argues that "the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light" (*Am*. 5:18–20); the day will be one of punishment, not salvation. Introducing the idea of God's punishment, he connects it with social crimes and the corruption of ritual. Amos is rooted in the sacred traditions of Israel (e.g., *Am*. 2:9–10, 3:1, 4:10, 4:11, 5:25, 9:7), and mentions them as proof of God's past and continuing involvement with Israel; but he emphasizes that this involvement is only in response to Israel's social and moral behavior.

In his autobiographical account, Amos mentions his occupation as a dresser of sycamore trees (7:14). This is a trade that required travel, especially since Tekoa, Amos's hometown (located about 8 miles [12.9 km] south of Jerusalem), is in an area where the sycamore does not grow (cf. *1 Kgs*. 10:27). Amos's travels may shed light on his broad education and deep knowledge of world affairs (see 1:2–2:16), as well as his contacts with the northern kingdom of Israel. It has also been suggested that Amos's Tekoa was somewhere in the north, which might explain his prophetic activity there; however, no evidence of a northern Tekoa has been found.

Sociologically, we must realize that many prophets (e.g., Amos, Micah, Jeremiah) came from the periphery to preach against urban centers. Villages and small towns preserved a traditional, clear view of the world. Cities, such as Samaria, were centers (especially during Amos's time) of prosperity, new developments, and social change. Social research reveals that it is not unusual for a visitor from a traditional area to be incensed by the breaking of traditional conventions in the city. Thus the changes that defied his traditional views kindled in Amos the fire of criticism and the desire to punish the evildoers.

Literary Style and Structure. There have been many discussions of Amos's language. Although he was the first literary prophet, his style is well developed. Does this mean that Amos followed a specific literary tradition, and if so, which? This question should not be of great concern to the modern reader, since in antiquity there was not a significant difference between an oral address and a written speech. Both genres were designed stylistically to be heard, not read silently by an individual reader. Thus Amos did not start a new written tradition but continued a well-developed tradition of oratory.

An analysis of Amos's style reveals impressive literary variations. He employs the conventional prophetic patterns of speech, such as "Thus says the Lord" (e.g., 1:3, 1:6, 1:9, 1:11, etc.); the prophetic formula for a conclusion, "Says the Lord" (2:3, 2:16); and the prophetic verdict, "Therefore" (3:2). He uses specific conventions of the wisdom literature, for example, the formula 3 x 4 (repeated in chaps. 1–2), comparisons, and rhetorical questions (3:3–8), the latter two reflecting secular language. He also employs ritualistic language, such as the hymn (4:13, 5:8–9, 9:5–6) and the lament (e.g., 5:2; see also 5:16–18, 6:1). Amos reveals himself to be a great poet, a master of language with creative skills who knows how to use various modes of speech effectively. His objective is to appeal to his audience. Thus, for instance, in 3:3–6 and 3:8 he utilizes a series of rhetorical questions, a most effective device since its function is to emphasize, and it is stronger than a direct statement. Amos's use of figurative language enables him to describe the disaster he encounters in concrete terms; see, for example, his use of simile in 2:13 and 3:12.

The *Book of Amos* is divided into four main parts: (1) the superscription plus the chain of oracles against the nations, including Judah and Israel (1:1–2:16); (2) a series of speeches (chaps. 3–6); (3) the vision accounts (7:1–3, 7:4–6, 7:7–9; 8:1ff., 9:1ff.); and (4) a prophecy of salvation (9:11–15). It has been suggested that the first three visions are Amos's call and should be placed at the beginning of the book. In the vision (8:1ff.) of the basket of summer fruit *(keluv qayits)*, the word "summer" *(qayits)* is a pun on the word for "destruction" *(qets)*, which symbolizes the end of Israel. This word-play may shed light on the psychology of prophetic revelation, in which the viewing of an object of daily life is interpreted in a vision or dream as a symbol. The series of vision accounts is interrupted by a biographical account (7:10–17), which reports on the conflict between Amaziah, priest of Bethel, and Amos, in which the priest demands that Amos go to Judah. In response to the question of why this account was inserted among the visions, scholars have suggested that the conclusion of Amos's attack on Amaziah, "Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land" (7:17), corresponds to the vision "The end has come upon my people Israel" (8:2) and that an editor, who some forty years later witnessed the exile of the priest of Bethel and his people by the Assyrians, inserted his account of this event as a sign of prophetic fulfillment.

Nineteenth-century scholarship assigned most of the material in the *Book of Amos* to Amos himself (except, perhaps, the prophecy of comfort at the end of the book). Current scholarship, however, is more skeptical

and suggests a lengthy and complex redactional history. It has long been argued that the book's conclusion (9:11–15), a prophecy of comfort focusing on the house of David (and not on the northern kingdom or its rulers), reflects a later period. The prophecy against Judah in 2:4–5, which is foreign in its context, is also considered to be late. Recent scholarship has been attempting to organize the editorial layers in order according to the occurrence of political developments. Wolff has suggested that six stages of redaction took place, with the first three stages in the eighth century: the collection of the oracles in chapters 3–6 (the words of Amos himself); the incorporation of the oracles directed against the nations at the beginning of the book and the visions at the end of the book; and the insertion of the prose account of the Bethel episode. In the fourth stage, in the time of Josiah, the doxologies (hymns) were added, as well as an elaboration of Amos' critique of Bethel and the local cult corresponding to Josiah's reform (cf. *2 Kgs.* 23:15). Later there was a fifth, Deuteronomistic, redaction, which occurred in the exilic period and added the oracles against Tyre (1:9–10), Edom (1:11–12), and Judah (2:4–5). Finally, there was a postexilic redaction that added themes of salvation and eschatology so that the book would conclude on a positive note. Another suggestion, by Coote, is that the *Book of Amos* is the product of three stages of redaction: (1) the words of judgment by Amos delivered against the ruling class; (2) the period of Judah's reform, which added oracles of reinterpretation concerning the possibility of repentance; and (3) another series of reinterpretations for Judahites who were in exile or who had returned to the homeland.

These theories of redactional history are nonetheless speculative, since they consider certain thematic developments or changes in the genre of prophetic speech to be indications of later accretions. They assume that changed historical conditions led to new theological interpretations. This notion of systematic change and reinterpretation may be challenged, however, in light of Amos's intention to appeal to his audience, which required stylistic and emphatic variety as well as sensitivity to the audience's mood. He may sometimes have called for repentance or perhaps delivered an oracle of salvation based upon his overall religious worldview. Still, this does not mean that Amos was the sole author of the entire book. There may have been specific insertions (e.g., 5:13), which, however, do not imply a systematic editorial process.

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YEHOSHUA GITAY

AMULETS AND TALISMANS. An amulet is an object, supposedly charged with magical power, that is carried on the person or displayed in a house, barn, or place of business in order to ward off misadventure, disease, or the assaults of malign beings, demonic or human. A talisman is an object similarly used to enhance a person's potentialities and fortunes. Amulets and talismans are two sides of the same coin. The former are designed to repel what is baneful; the latter, to impel what is beneficial. The employment of both (which is universal) rests on the belief that the inherent quality of a thing can be transmitted to human beings by contact.

The choice of objects used as amulets and talismans is determined by several different criteria. They may be (1) of unusual form, such as perforated stones; (2) rare, such as four-leaved clovers; (3) medicinal herbs or flowers, such as mugwort (thought to ease childbirth) or various kinds of febrifuges; (4) parts of animals exemplifying certain characteristics (for example, of a hare for swiftness or a bull for strength), or deemed potent in protecting from attacks by those animals; (5) relics of holy or heroic persons, or even dust from their graves, regarded as imbued with those persons' "numinous" charisma; (6) figurines of gods and goddesses; (7) models of common objects to which a symbolic significance is attributed, such as miniature ladders exemplifying the means of the soul's ascent to heaven; (8) exotic objects of foreign provenience, which are held to contain powers not normally available in a given society. The color of an object may also be decisive, on the basis of "like affects like"; a red stone, for instance, may be thought to relieve bloody flux or menstrual disorders and a yellow stone, to ward off jaundice. Ubiquitous also are models of the male and female genitalia, to increase procreation and sexual pleasure, and threads, to bind evil spirits.

Nor is it only in material things that magical power is thought to reside. Since, in primitive thought, the name of a person is not a mere verbal appellation but an essential component of his being (like his shadow or voice), that of a god or demon written on a slip or engraved on a gem or a medallion can serve as an effective amulet or talisman. Similarly, a text relating some feat or special benefit, especially the discomfiture of a demon, dragon, or monster, associated in traditional myth and folklore with a god or hero, may be regarded as charged with the power that accomplished that deed, so that to carry such a text on one's person transmits that power and perpetuates it. Scrolls or scripts containing excerpts from scriptures accepted as divinely inspired and therefore instinct with the divine essence, or (in medieval Christian usage) copies of letters said to have fallen from heaven are likewise favored.

Sometimes, however—especially when an amulet is directed against human rather than demonic enemies—the procedure adopted is not to enlist the influence and charisma of gods or "numinous" objects but to scare potential attackers by exhibiting in houses statuettes or figurines of monstrous, terrifying creatures. The Babylonians, for instance, fashioned models of the head and body of the grim demon Pazuzu, and one form of Greek amulet was the head of a gorgon whose eye could petrify would-be assailants.

Of salient importance is the material out of which an amulet or talisman is made, since the magic power is inherent in, not merely associated with, the object itself. Gems have to be of substances and colors believed to convey qualities efficacious for particular needs and written texts have to be inscribed on specified skins and in special inks or pigments.

Amulets and talismans borne on the person take the form of ornaments—brooches, lockets, pendants, seals, and sachets. Indeed, it is maintained by several authorities that what came eventually to be mere decorations were originally designed for protection. [*See* Jewelry.]

A cardinal feature of amulets in many cultures is that they are esoteric and although, to be sure, they are often exhibited in full view on the walls of rooms and buildings, when they are carried on the person it is often a requirement that they must not be revealed to anyone except to the one who uses them on a specific occasion, to the magicians who make and dispense them, and to the hostile beings against whom they are directed. For this reason they are commonly concealed in the clothing or tucked away in bags or small cases. Moreover, in the case of written texts, they frequently employ cryptic alphabets or are couched in gibberish (known as *ephesia grammata*—perhaps a distortion of *aphasia grammata*, i.e., "unutterable letters"), supposed to be the scripts and languages of gods and demons. (These can sometimes be identified as genuine ancient scripts and tongues garbled in the course of the ages.) Signs of the zodiac and conventional symbols of constellations and metals also appear, because such signs are, like names, part and parcel of what they represent and because the inherent properties of constellations and metals are believed to control human fate and fortune. Common too

are permutations of letters spelling out in esoteric fashion the words of the text. Thus (to use English equivalents) *z* will substitute for *a*, *y* for *b*, and so forth. In much the same way, the initial or final letters of words in a scriptural verse will be used instead of writing it out in full, and in alphabetical systems (like Hebrew) where each letter also possesses a numerical value (i.e., *a* = 1, *b* = 2, etc.), a combination of letters that add up to the same total as those of the word intended—a device known as gematria (probably a distortion of the Greek *grammateia*)—is employed. (The Library of Congress possesses the manuscript of a complete Hebrew Bible so written as a manual for the preparation of amulets!) A further device is the use of magical squares, each vertical column and each horizonal line of which adds up to the same sum, and all of them together spelling by gematria the name of God or of a protective angel.

The esoteric character of amuletic texts, it may be added, is matched in oral spells by having them recited in a whisper or crooned in a low voice. Indeed, this is the primary meaning of the term *incantation*.

Written amulets frequently express their numinous character by beginning with the words "In the name of [this or that god]" (e.g., the Arabic Bismillah, "In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate") and by being interspersed with religious signs (e.g., the cross, swastika, or shield of David), and their efficacy is increased by marks or letters (*ss* or *kh*) indicating that their recitation is to be accompanied by hissing and spitting to ward off demons. They also feature strings of vowel letters standing cryptically for the powers of angels or planets. Sometimes too the power of a written amulet is conveyed not simply by wearing it but by immersing it in water that is then drunk.

Amulets and talismans seem to have been in use even in prehistoric times, for cowrie shells, celts, arrowheads, and stones buried with the dead (a practice surviving throughout the ages) were evidently intended to protect them in the afterworld. Amuletic too were the pictures of eyes painted on prehistoric walls and monuments; these represented the providential vigilance of benevolent gods or spirits, countering the evil eye of the malevolent demons.

It is obviously impossible in the space of this article to describe in detail the whole host of amulets and talismans current all over the world. We shall therefore confine ourselves to representative examples of the principal types drawn from various cultures ancient and modern.

Historically, the oldest amulets came from Egypt. Dating as far back as the fourth millennium BCE, these take the form of images and figurines made of faience,

feldspar, carnelian, obsidian, jasper, and the like wrapped in the bandages that swathed mummies. Each limb of the corpse had its appropriate amulet, usually placed over it. In addition to figurines of gods and goddesses there are miniature hearts, eyes of Horus, frogs, ladders, and steps. The eyes of Horus (usually a pair), made of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, hematite, or porcelain, represented the all-powerful might and watchfulness of that god and were worn also by the living to bring health and protection. The frog, emblematic of teeming abundance, symbolized life in the broadest sense, including resurrection of the body. The miniature ladder stood for the means of ascent to heaven. Miniature ladders are still set up beside graves by the Mangors of Nepal, and a ladder made of dough was traditionally placed next to coffins in some parts of Russia. One recalls also Jacob's ladder in the Bible (*Gn.* 28:12) and the reference to the same notion in Dante's *Paradiso* (21.25ff.)

Ubiquitous also was the familiar *ankh*. What it actually portrays is uncertain; some say it represents a combination of the male and female genitalia and hence (eternal) life. It was carried also in the right hand of deities, where, of course, it was not amuletic but a symbol of immortality. Scarabs (a species of beetle) were also interred with the dead. This particular type of beetle, one that continually rolls pellets of dung until they become larger and larger, symbolizes the process of continuous creation.

Mention should be made also of the so-called Horus *cippi*, stelae or plaques inscribed with legends of that god and portraying him standing on, or beside, serpents he had vanquished. A Canaanite version of this myth has recently been recognized in a Canaanite magical text from Ras Shamra (Ugarit) in northern Syria. The *cippi* were displayed to ward off malign spirits.

Other ancient Near Eastern amulets, common among the Babylonians, Assyrians, Canaanites, and Hittites, take the form of cylinder seals, usually made of diorite or hematite, engraved with mythological scenes depicting the discomfiture of demonic monsters by gods or the vanquishing of the formidable Huwawa, guardian of the sacred forest of cedars, by the heroes Gilgamesh and Enkidu. Sometimes, too, pictures of men supplicating gods, the beneficent sun rising between mountains, or a goddess bountifully pouring water from two jugs are featured. In interpreting these "mythological" amulets it is important to bear in mind that the scenes depicted may be simply mythologizations of general principles. Thus the goddess who pours water may be simply an illustration of bountiful profusion. Often, indeed, the basic meaning may be elicited by matching the glyptic portrayal with a corresponding verbal metaphor.

Another popular Mesopotamian and Canaanite amulet was a plaque portraying the ravages and eventual dispatch of a demonic hag or wolf who stole newborn babes. This has analogues in many parts of the world, for example, in Armenia, Ethiopia, and the Balkans, and especially in a Jewish charm, the so-called *Kimpezettl* (a Yiddish distortion of the German *Kindbettzettel*, "childbirth note"), in which the beldam is identified with Lilith.

Despite the monotheistic orientation of the writers of the Old Testament, amulets seem to have been used by the masses in ancient Israel. The prophet Isaiah castigates women who wore charms (3:20), and a silver amulet inscribed with the words of the Priestly Blessing (*Nm.* 6:24-27) and purportedly dating to the sixth century BCE has been found in Palestine. On the other hand, a figurative reference to amulets in *Deuteronomy* 6:8 was later taken literally and led to the modern Jewish practise of affixing to doorposts a small cylinder *(mezuzah)* containing excerpts from the Pentateuch and of wearing phylacteries *(tefillin)* on the brow and arm at morning prayer.

More modern Jewish amulets are the hexagram, fancifully termed the shield, not star, of David. This, however, is simply a judaized version of a magical symbol of disputed meaning that is widely used elsewhere. Its counterpart is the equally universal pentagram, known to Jews as the seal of Solomon. Common too are metal amulets in the shape of the divine hand (likewise fairly universal), often engraved with the letter *h*, an abbreviation of Je*H*ovah. A favorite written amulet is a strip of paper on which is inscribed ABRACADABRA (variously interpreted) in a series of lines, each of which has one more letter cut off at the end, so that the series gradually diminishes to form an inverted pyramid ending with the single letter A. In recent times a further popular amulet is a golden pendant or brooch shaped in the form of the letters of the Hebrew word *ḥai* ("life, living").

Of special interest is a class of gems or semiprecious stones (sard, beryl, chalcedony, onyx, etc.) found mainly in Egypt of the Greco-Roman period (but later also in other lands), featuring fantastic images—often part human and part animal—of Egyptian and other gods accompanied by magical inscriptions such as the mysterious "Ablalhanalba," which is said to be a distorted palindrome of the Hebrew phrase "Av lanu [Aram., *lan*] attah," "Thou art a father to us." Prominent among the deities depicted is a certain Abraxas (or Abrasax), who is an important figure in the teachings of the gnostics. These have therefore been termed gnostic amulets, but the attribution is increasingly questioned by modern scholars. When these amulets came to be current in Christian circles the mysterious name *Ablalhanalba* was explained as equivalent by gematria to *Jesus.*

In many countries, written amulets are more common than any other. Among Muslims, for instance, the most popular type is a small case containing excerpts from the Qu'rān or a list of the ninety-nine epithets of God. The Copts use pictures illustrating the defeat of a monster by Saint George of Lydda, and the Ethiopians, scrolls relating the praises of the Virgin Mary, or grotesque representations of the divine eye or face. This, however, by no means precludes the use of ornamental amulets. Christians most often carry miniature crosses or crucifixes, but equally common is the written legend "Sator Arepo," which is really "Paternoster" spelled cryptically.

The Japanese use, besides relics, two forms of amulet that deserve mention. One of these is an image, painted on pillows, of an animal who swallows bad dreams. The other amulet is a pair of dead sardines affixed to a stick of holly at the entrance to a house to keep away noxious spirits at the annual festival of Setsubun. (This finds a parallel in the use of garlic elsewhere.)

The use of colors in amulets is influenced also in medieval magic by the belief that they carry the charisma of the sun, moon, and the seven planets. Thus, yellow stones (amber, topaz) bear the "influence" of the sun; whitish stones (diamond, mother-of-pearl), of the moon; red stones (ruby), of Mars; green stones (emerald), of Venus; black stones (jet, onyx, obsidian), of Saturn; and so forth. Moreover, each stone "controlled" a specific condition. Agate, in Italy, is deemed efficacious against the evil eye, and in Syria against intestinal disorders. Crystal cures dropsy and toothache; diamond neutralizes poisons and also averts thunderstorms. Furthermore, gems promote human passions and affections. Beryl gives hope; carbuncle, energy and assurance; ruby, love; and of coral it is said that it fades when a friend dies. There is also a stone for every month, and these are often featured in brooches inscribed with zodiacal signs portraying a person's horoscope.

Lastly, with regard to the use of exotic objects as amulets and talismans, a curious fact is worth mentioning. Many years ago the present writer had occasion to examine a number of ceremonial costumes worn by African shamans and found that several of them included a pouch worn on the breast. Opening these, he discovered that their contents consisted mainly of European hairpins, scissors, cigarette butts, London omnibus tickets, and similar foreign paraphernalia deemed magical.

Like myths and popular tales, the actual forms of amulets migrate from one culture to another as the result of trade relations, conquests, importation of captives, intermarriage, voyages, and the like, but new

meanings are then read into them in order to accommodate them to the beliefs and traditional lore of those who adopt them. Thus (as we have said) the hexagram became to Jews the shield of David, the cross to Christians a symbol of Christ, and the dung-rolling beetle (heper) to the Egyptians the emblem of the creator god Hepera and the pellet as the orb of the sun that he rolled across the sky. It is necessary, therefore, in interpreting these vehicles of magic, to get behind such particular local explanations of them and to attempt to recover their underlying, subliminal significance. This approach, however, is inevitably fraught with the perils of subjectivism and has led, indeed, to any number of psychological fantasies and absurdities. But *abusus non tollit usum;* a spurious coin does not invalidate currency, and the basic nature of amulets will never be understood unless the attempt is made to do so.

[*See also* Stones; Relics; *and* Images.]

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THEODOR H. GASTER

AMUN was originally one of the eight primordial gods of Hermopolis in Middle Egypt. Together with his consort Amaunet, Amun represented the precreation chthonic aspect of "hiddenness." This pair, with the three other pairs comprising the Hermopolitan ogdoad, produced the egg from which the creator god came forth.

In the Middle Kingdom (2050–1756 BCE), when a Theban family took the throne of Egypt their local god, Montu, a war god, became assimilated with Amun and also with Min, the ithyphallic fertility god of Coptos, Thebes' neighbor and ally. This new, all-powerful, anthropomorphic god also incorporated the attributes of his predecessor, Re, the chief god of the Egyptian pantheon in the later Old Kingdom (2686–2181 BCE). Amun-

Re, "king of the gods," who was sometimes represented as a ram-headed sun god, had as his consort Mut ("mother"); their son, Khonsu, was the local moon god.

The cult center and chief temple of Amun-Re, at Karnak in the Theban nome of Upper Egypt, was begun in the Middle Kingdom and was added to and greatly enlarged through the next two thousand years. This cult temple became the religious center of Egypt; it benefited greatly from the victorious campaigns of New Kingdom pharaohs (1567–1160 BCE) and eventually was controlled by a family of priests who also became kings of Egypt in the twenty-first dynasty.

Henotheistic hymns to Amun-Re were very near to the tone of Akhenaton's hymn to Aton. The so-called Amarna Revolution that Akhenaton fostered seems to have been as much a political move against the growing power of the priesthood of Amun as a religious move to supplant Amun-Re, though the reaction to Akhenaton's changes appeared as a condemnation of heresy. [*See* Akhenaton.]

The chief festivals of Amun-Re included the Opet Feast and the Beautiful Feast of the Valley. In the former the image of the god in his shrine was carried in procession on a bark between Karnak and the Luxor temple, which was known as the Southern Harem. For the Feast of the Valley, the statue of the god was ferried to the west bank of the Nile for visits at several of the royal mortuary temples and shrines in this vast Theban necropolis.

To the south of Egypt, in Nubia, devotion to Amun was at least as fervent as it was in Egypt during the Late Period. When Piye (Piankhy) conquered Egypt (c. 750 BCE) he intended to set things right for Amun in his native land. He even left his own daughter to serve as Divine Adoratress of Amun at Karnak. Some of the largest additions to the Karnak temple were made during the last native dynasties, and important additions were made by the Greek rulers after Alexander's conquest.

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LEONARD H. LESKO

AN is the Sumerian name (meaning "heaven") of the chief god in the Mesopotamian pantheon; his Akkadian name is Anum. Unlike the names of other gods, *An* has

no special cuneiform sign (determinative). To write his name the Mesopotamians simply used the cuneiform sign for a god in general—*dingir* in Sumerian and *an* in Akkadian. An's divine number was sixty, the highest number of all the Mesopotamian gods. (Each of the major Mesopotamian deities had a symbolic number ranging from ten to sixty.) The epithets conferred on him—"king of the gods," "king of heaven," "king of the lands"—indicated his role as leader. Hence, any god likened to An was thought of as a leader.

Nevertheless, An did not normally exercise executive authority. In the mythological texts his powers were limited, and he was never able to compete with the more dynamic gods such as Enlil, Enki (Ea), and Ninurta. An's significance in the religious life and the cult was relatively small: of the hundreds of extant hymns and prayers only a handful are addressed directly to him.

An's cult center was Uruk, and his chief sanctuary was called Eanna ("temple of heaven"). His consort in early Sumerian times was Urash (the name deriving from a rare word for "earth"), and later Antu, the Akkadian feminine counterpart of An. An was considered aloof and somewhat hostile to people. In the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, he (along with Enlil) was responsible for bringing about the deluge described in the epic's eleventh tablet. His numerous offspring included the seven evil spirits called the Sebettu, and the dreaded female demon Lamashtu.

In the Seleucid period (c. third century BCE) An's cult experienced a revival, and temples were once again built in his honor at Uruk. Texts from that time describe in detail the worship of An with the proper ritual at the Akitu (New Year) festival. There are no extant representations of An, but his emblem, a horned tiara, appears on a number of Middle Babylonian and Neo-Babylonian boundary stones.

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DAVID MARCUS

ANABAPTISM. *Anabaptist* comes from the Greek word meaning "rebaptizer." It was never used by the Anabaptists, for whom baptism signified the external witness of an inner faith covenant of the believer with God through Jesus Christ. Baptism was always administered in the name of the Trinity, usually by pouring water, but sometimes by sprinkling or immersion.

The Anabaptist movement had multiple origins. An earlier view saw it primarily as an effort on the part of Conrad Grebel (c. 1498–1526), Felix Mantz (c. 1498–1527), and other co-workers of Huldrych Zwingli (1484–1531), the Zurich reformer, to complete the reformation of the church. We are now aware, however, of additional influences in bringing the movement to birth. These include peasant unrest brought on by social and economic injustice; the rhetoric of the fiery German peasant leader Thomas Müntzer (1488?–1525); the writings of Martin Luther (1483–1546) and, especially, Andreas Karlstadt (1480–1541); the influence of late medieval mysticism and asceticism; and the dynamics of reform in specific monasteries. Anabaptism arose as a radical reform movement out of the economic, social, political, and religious situation in early sixteenth-century Europe.

Anabaptism began formally in Zollikon, near Zurich, on 21 January 1525, when Grebel, Mantz, Georg Blaurock (c. 1492–1529), and others baptized each other on confession of faith, thus forming a separatist congregation. This event, however, was preceded by debates with Zwingli and the Zurich city council, beginning in 1523, over the nature of desired reforms. On issues like abolition of the Mass, dietary regulations, the authority of scripture over tradition, and the veneration of relics, these first Anabaptists were in complete agreement with Zwingli. Nor was infant baptism, which they believed to be contrary to scripture, a critical issue, although it had great implications for the nature of the church. The ultimate break with Zwingli concerned the authority of the city council (the state) over the church, which Zwingli affirmed and his disciples denied. The immediate and final event that precipitated the first baptismal ceremony was a decree issued by the city council demanding the baptism of all infants within eight days, on pain of banishment of the persons involved.

The (Swiss) Brethren, as the new group preferred to be called, found strong support among the people, not so much on the issue of baptism but in the Brethren's anticlericalism, their desire for local congregational autonomy, their rejection of excessive taxation, and their involvement in small Bible-study groups and other practices that met apparent spiritual needs of the people. As a result, the movement grew rapidly, and

with its growth there was increasingly severe persecution. Mantz became one of the first martyrs when he was drowned in the Limmat River at Zurich in January 1527.

In 1530, Melchior Hofmann (c. 1495–1543), a widely traveled Lutheran preacher with chiliastic tendencies, came to Strasbourg, where his contacts must have included not only Swiss Brethren but also spiritualists and other "free spirits," as well as the major Strasbourg reformers Martin Bucer (1491–1551) and Wolfgang Capito (1478–1541). Hofmann left the city the same year, under the duress of the reformers and the city council, because of an inclination to Anabaptism, although it is not clear whether he himself received believers' baptism. On arrival in the northern city of Emden he soon attracted a large following, in part at least because of his apocalyptic message of the imminent return of Christ; and in a short time more than three hundred persons had been baptized. Selected leaders were ordained, and they in turn ordained others to help bring in the Kingdom.

Hofmann was pacifistic, content to await God's own time, but others armed themselves to bring in the Kingdom by force. In May 1530 there was an abortive attempt to take the city of Amsterdam. Other incidents followed. In 1534 the city of Münster in Westphalia was declared to be the New Jerusalem and fell under the control of the Melchiorites, though Hofmann himself had returned to Strasbourg and lay in prison there. In 1535 Münster fell before the onslaught of the regional bishop's troops, and most of its inhabitants were killed. The Münster episode was in large part responsible for the centuries-long designation of Anabaptism as violent and revolutionary. It was also in response to these events that Menno Simons left his nearby Roman Catholic parish and, after going underground for a time of reflection and writing, emerged as the primary leader of peaceful Anabaptism.

Meanwhile, the Swiss and South German Brethren grew in numbers even as persecution increased. As a result, many migrated to other areas, particularly Austria and Moravia. As refugees arrived, a sharing of goods with them seemed both practical and biblical. This practice began in 1529, and by 1533 it had become normative for many in the area under the leadership of Jacob Hutter (d. 1536), who made it a central article of faith. Those who followed this group became known as Hutterian Brethren, or Hutterites. Numerous congregations also emerged in south-central Germany under the leadership of Hans Hut (d. 1527), Hans Denk (c. 1500–1527), Pilgram Marpeck (d. 1556), the more radical Melchior Rink (c. 1494–1545), and others.

The variety of centers from which Anabaptists emerged and the various influences upon them make it difficult to talk about one all-encompassing faith to which all confessed. There was a great deal of pluralism. Nevertheless, there was in all the sixteenth-century Anabaptists a common core of beliefs by which they recognized one another and that in time became normative. The elements of this core came from their statements of faith, the testimony of martyrs, court records, hymns, letters, records of disputations held with authorities and others, and the writings of major leaders. The extent to which the ideals of these affirmations of faith were practiced in daily life, or were simply held as embodying an ideal vision, also varied from person to person.

In September 1524, Grebel and his friends wrote to Luther, Karlstadt, and Müntzer to seek counsel. Only the two letters to Müntzer are extant. In them several emphases are already clear: the primary authority of the scriptures; the Lord's Supper conceived as a memorial and a sign of love among believers; the importance of redemptive church discipline according to *Matthew* 18:15–18; the belief that baptism must follow a personal profession of faith and that it is a sign of such faith rather than a saving sacrament; the belief that children are saved by the redemptive work of the second Adam, Christ; a conviction that weapons of violence have no place among Christians; and the belief that the church is called to be a suffering church.

In 1527 the Anabaptists convened a conference at Schleitheim, on the Swiss-German border. The death of many early leaders led to some discontinuity with their thought and spirit. A more separatist-sectarian view emerged. Seven articles constituted the "Brotherly Union," as it was called, a statement summarizing the central issues of faith in which the framers of the statement differed from the "false brethren." Who these brethren were is not clear. The prime mover at the meeting and the author of the articles was Michael Sattler (c. 1490–1527), a former Benedictine monk from Saint Peter's monastery near Freiburg, Germany. In addition to most of the above emphases, three others were added: a radical church-world dualism that asserted complete separation of believers from all others; the importance of church order and the necessity of pastoral leadership as discerned by the congregation; and rejection of the oath as an affirmation of truth.

The other documents mentioned above amplify but do not add significant new doctrinal affirmations to the two early statements from Grebel's letter and the Brotherly Union. The primacy of the New Testament over the Old Testament is affirmed, as well as the doctrine of separation that naturally excludes participation in civil or political office. Simons stressed that the

church, as the bride of Christ, must be pure; he also stressed the importance of witness and mission, which most Anabaptists took for granted as a part of discipleship. Dirk Philips (1504–1568) affirmed the ordinance of foot washing. In their verbal and written statements, most Anabaptists confirmed their intention of restoring the church to its early New Testament pattern and practice.

[*See also* Mennonites *and the biographies of* Hutter, Müntzer, *and* Simons.]

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CORNELIUS J. DYCK

ANĀHITĀ. Along with Mithra and Ahura Mazdā, Anāhitā is one of the major divinities of ancient Iran. Her cult grew from the Achaemenid to the Parthian period and extended beyond Iran during the rule of the Sasanids. In Armenia and in Asia Minor it flourished near Persian communities and was spread through the syncretic and eclectic activities of the Magi. As the Iranian great goddess, Anāhitā has multivalent characteristics: she is the divinity of royalty, of war, and of fertility, with which she is especially associated (Dumézil, 1947).

As Herodotus testifies, Anāhitā was of foreign origin, Assyrian and Arab. This is confirmed by the fact that her cult was not aniconic: according to Berossus, Artaxerxes II (404–359 BCE) proclaimed the cult of the goddess throughout the empire, erecting statues of her. The Mesopotamian Ishtar, the divinity of the planet Venus, and the Elamite Nanā certainly exerted a strong influence on her development.

Anāhitā is an amalgam of an Iranian or Indo-Iranian divinity, the spirit of the waters that run down from the mythical Mount Harā, and the great goddess of Near Eastern tradition. Perhaps originally named *Harahvatī ("rich in waters"), she is analogous to the Indian goddess Sarasvatī (Lommel, 1954). The Avesta mentions the *yazata* Aredvī Sūrā Anāhitā—a name comprising three designations that reflect her multivalent character: "moist, strong, immaculate"—to whom the important hymn "of the waters" (*Yashts* 5) is dedicated. Achaemenid inscriptions, beginning with Artaxerxes II, invoke Anāhitā along with Mithra and Ahura Mazdā. Classical sources, especially Strabo, document the importance of the goddess's cult in the Parthian period. She had many Greek interpretations: from Aphrodite Ourania to Hestia, from Artemis to Athena.

Anāhitā gained in importance with the accession of the Sasanids, linked by tradition to the goddess's sanctuary at Stakhr, in Fārs. According to various sources at our disposal (Syriac, Armenian, and Arabic), the warlike character and regal nature of the great goddess are prominent under Sasanid rule. She appeared at the sovereigns' investiture (Göbl, 1960) and played a major role, not inferior to that of Ōhrmazd himself, as royal divinity, the source and protector of sovereignty.

[*See also* Sarasvatī.]

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ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY. In a broad sense, the practice of seeking better understanding through the analysis (i.e., the breaking down and restatement) of complex, obscure, or problematic linguistic expressions has been present within philosophy from its pre-Socratic origins to the present. More narrowly considered, analytic philosophy ("linguistic analysis") is a style of philosophizing originating within twentieth-century English-language philosophy and drawing much of its inspiration from the later thought of Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951). [*See the biography of Wittgenstein.*]

The remote ancestry of analytic philosophy is well illustrated in the dialogues of Plato, where Socrates is shown to be concerned with delineating the meaning of key concepts like "piety," "justice," or "soul." In the *Phaedo,* Socrates, in one of his last moments with his disciples, is shown teasing Crito about the corrupting power of familiar but misleading language. Crito has asked how Socrates should be buried. Socrates points out that one should not confuse the person designated "Socrates" with his body and thus should not speak of burying a "you," a person. Unanalyzed speech, as in this case, Socrates warns, can lead to unreflective materialism in thought and life. A major strand or concern in the rest of the history of Western philosophy can be read in a similar light, as overt or covert analysis of language. [*See the biography of Socrates.*]

The more immediate origins of analytic philosophy, however, lie in the reaction of British philosophers at the beginning of the twentieth century against the then-dominant Hegelianism of such thinkers as F. H. Bradley (1846–1924), who placed all emphasis on finding meaning in the "whole" rather than any partial expressions and thus placed in jeopardy, it was feared, all finite human understanding. Leaders in the attempt to counter the exaggerated stress on "synthesis" with clarifying analyses of philosophical obscurities were G. E. Moore (1873–1958) and Bertrand Russell (1872–1970). Moore, appealing to "common sense" arguments, provided detailed ordinary language analyses of such important terms as "good" and what it means to have "certain knowledge" of something. Russell, on the other hand, offered more technical translations, using the symbolic

logic he had created with Alfred North Whitehead to express, for instance, his "theory of definite descriptions" as a means of analyzing problematic sentences about nonexistent but still meaningful entities (like "Hamlet" or "the present king of France") and thereby of removing puzzlements and paradoxes.

To this philosophical context Ludwig Wittgenstein, a former student of Russell's, returned in 1929, to Cambridge from Vienna, fresh from conversations with members of the Vienna Circle, with whom he had helped to develop the logical rule ("the verification principle of meaning") that the meaning of all nontautological statements is to be identified with the method of their sensory verification. Wittgenstein's *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* (completed in 1918 and first published in 1921) had carried to its limit the quest for a powerful and simple formalization of ideal language, rooting all factual meaning in basic propositions naming atomic facts. These ultimate simples had later been identified with sensory observations by the radical empiricists of the Vienna Circle in the creation of logical positivism. Now Wittgenstein began to have misgivings, not only about the empirical interpretation given to his more general theory of language but also about the theory itself. In its simplicity lay its great power, but its application in logical positivism showed also its oversimplicity when compared to the many actual uses of human language—for instance, in asking, thanking, cursing, greeting, praying. The assertion of sensorily verifiable fact, Wittgenstein saw, is only one among a vast range of functions of language. Such a function is doubtless of great importance in natural science and in ordinary life, but even such an important function hardly begins to exhaust the richness of speech. [*See* Logical Positivism.]

Wittgenstein's subsequent meditations on the limitations of his own *Tractatus* and on the rich complexity of language, published posthumously in 1953 as *Philosophical Investigations* (henceforth abbreviated as *PI*), were enormously influential, particularly after World War II. Philosophically puzzling expressions, Wittgenstein contends, did not need verification so much as analysis of their use. In the use would be found the meaning. "Look at the sentence as an instrument," he advises, "and at its sense as its employment" (*PI*, 421). In this way philosophical confusions can be eliminated by the method of returning a puzzling expression to its origins in ordinary use. "The confusions which occupy us arise when language is like an engine idling, not when it is doing work" (*PI*, 132). This method will not involve the application of a single procrustean technique, like the verification principle, but a generally open attitude toward the various uses that language

may be given. Thus philosophical method will be fitted to each occasion. "There is not *a* philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, like different therapies" (*PI*, 133). Wittgenstein liked and repeated his therapeutic analogy: "The philosopher's treatment of a question is like the treatment of an illness" (*PI*, 255).

The application of this style of philosophical analysis to theological and religious speech differs in tenor depending on whether the assumption is made that theological discourse is, *ipso facto*, an "idling" form of language or whether it is capable of "doing work." If the former, then the "therapy" called for might be termed "eliminative analysis." If the latter, however, then the point of analysis will be to show what sort or sorts of "work" constitute the meaning of theological utterances. These, which might be termed "illuminative analyses," further divide according to the range of functions found.

For the most part the philosophical climate created by linguistic analysis is not hospitable to eliminative analysis. Such an enterprise would bear too much resemblance to the pugnacious days of logical positivism. Indeed, most attempts to show that a "systematic misuse of language" necessarily infects theological talk, and that people should not talk that way, rest on verificationist assumptions. On the other hand, "illuminative" analysis can be perceived by believers as no less threatening than eliminative analysis if the linguistic functions identified are too meager to accord with the user's own sense of the dignity or importance—or intent—of the speech-act involved. The logical positivists themselves had granted at least that the utterances of religious people perform the function of expressing or evoking emotion. The shift to linguistic analysis from logical positivism called for penetration. As Wittgenstein himself said: "What am I believing in when I believe that men have souls? What am I believing in, when I believe that this substance contains two carbon rings? In both cases there is a picture in the foreground, but the sense lies far in the background; that is, the application of the picture is not easy to survey" (*PI*, 422).

One answer attempting to penetrate beyond the logical positivist's analysis of religious utterance as merely emotive was offered in 1955 by R. B. Braithwaite (b. 1900) after his conversion to Christianity. Though remaining a philosophical empiricist, and on such grounds finding it impossible to affirm the doctrines of his religion in a traditional sense of belief, Braithwaite suggested that Christian speech can in fact function otherwise, by making and supporting ethical commitments to the "agapeistic" way of life. Images of Christian love (agape) are vividly presented in the sacred writings, all of which, he claimed, refer to or reduce to the love com-

mandment. Uttering words from these writings is not like asserting a matter of fact—though the form of the words may suggest this—but is committing oneself to a way of life authoritatively pictured in these stories. Such is the legitimate "work" of religious speech, which thus supplies the needed "application of the picture."

Braithwaite's analysis, though not widely accepted as adequate to the full functioning of Christian language, showed how a more flexible approach to "how we do things with words" could be applied to the theological context. The highly regarded Oxford philosopher J. L. Austin (1911–1960) further spurred such attempts with his stress on the "performative" significance of language. His influence brought much attention to the fact that sometimes we are not so much describing the world as performing in it when we speak: making promises, uttering commands, taking oaths, naming, bidding at auctions, pronouncing marriage vows, accepting invitations, and the like. In Canada, Donald Evans (b. 1927) offered a detailed account of religious speech, demonstrating the logic of "self-involvement" as performative.

To such analyses were added others aiming to show how the belief-statements of theology might also play an important role, though not, of course, in making simple empirical claims. R. M. Hare (b. 1919), in Oxford, provided an analysis of religious belief-statements as "bliks," or unshakable preconditions for seeing the world in a certain way. Some "bliks" might be insane, as in delusional paranoia, but others might be both sane and essential, as in the conviction that the world is causally bound together in a regular way. Neither kind is falsifiable, like an empirical hypothesis, but either may function to shape a world-picture within which particular empirical observations make sense in one way or another. Likewise John Wisdom (b. 1904), at Cambridge, stressed the way in which certain utterances, though not themselves factual, may direct attention to patterns in the facts that otherwise might be missed. A metaphor of the Taj Mahal, applied to a woman's hat, could change not the facts but the way the facts were seen; the metaphor of the world as a garden could have a similar effect in directing attention to patterns among the facts of everyday life as well as in influencing attitudes towards them.

Such analyses of the heuristic power of theological images, especially if they are taken (as with Wisdom) as illuminating or (with Hare) as potentially sane or insane, go far toward reestablishing theological discourse, with regard to at least one aspect of its "work," as making claims that could be supported or attacked in normative ways. That such claims are often in fact intended by religious believers had long been evident to

any analyst who might care to ask (or to participate in) the community of religious-language users; but, perhaps because of the legacy of logical positivism's animosity to metaphysics, some analytical philosophers were slow to shake the curious supposition that analyses of linguistic use might proceed as though the intentions of the primary users could be ignored or corrected. Genuine analysis aims at revealing, not changing, what the user is doing with words.

A linguistic philosophy that is not tied to an *a priori* supposition that certain functions of speech, such as metaphysical ones, are "impossible" will be hospitable to all the various sorts of "work" that are done by religious utterances. These will include, among others, factual claims (e.g., "The Shroud of Turin dates from early in the first millennium AD"), historical claims (e.g., "Ramses III was the pharaoh of the Exodus"), poetic utterances (e.g., "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light"), ethical prescriptions (e.g., "Turn the other cheek"), parables, folk tales, and complex theoretical doctrines. Several functions may be performed by a single type of utterance. Telling the parable of the Prodigal Son under certain circumstances, for example, may involve at the same time the act of self-commitment to a way of life, the receiving of emotional support, the expression of remorse and hope for personal forgiveness, and the affirmation of a doctrine of God's nature. Standing in church and reciting an ancient creed, on the other hand, may sometimes function more as a ritual of group-membership and reverence for continuity with the past than as an assertion. Part of the work of linguistic philosophy as applied to religion is to clarify the subtle differences between these functions and to help the users themselves see more clearly the range of lively possibilities afforded by their speech.

At least in some important cases, as we have seen, religious discourse makes claims and bears resemblances to other putatively referential speech. This was acknowledged by Wittgenstein in the passage (*PI*, 422), cited above, in which he compared belief in the soul with belief in carbon rings. In both cases a model, or a "picture," must be connected by indirect means to a sense that lies "far in the background." Another part of the work of linguistic philosophy, therefore, is to trace the similarities and differences between such puzzling cases. Perhaps the vivid poetical "pictures" of religious first-order discourse provide conceptual parallels to the scientific models "in the foreground" that interpret theoretical concepts functioning to unify and illuminate experience. If so, the range of relevant data to be organized is typically much broader for religious concepts, since scientific concepts—though often less open to observational verification or falsification than the logical

positivists had claimed—are always kept deliberately close to some specifiable observational domain. This is typically not the case with the "omnirelevant" concepts of theology. Another key difference is that the sacred stories, myths, and "pictures" of religious thinking play a more important, historically and valuationally primary, role in the discourse of religious communities than do models in scientific discourse. Both considerations help one understand why religious concepts are not used to make readily falsifiable claims. At the same time, however, such considerations show that theological theory based on the imagery of primary religious speech may function to aid in efforts of conceptual synthesis, the attempt to hold together a unifying world-picture that is both theoretically intelligible and framed in terms of sacred values.

Linguistic analysis is not merely "about language," then, as one unfortunate misconception would have it. The aim of analytic philosophy pursued in the spirit of the later Wittgenstein is to illuminate the varied functions of speech and the many meanings of "meaning." Its efforts are spent in allowing whatever is said to be said more effectively and with greater awareness for both speaker and listener. Like all philosophy, it is engaged in the serious exercise of consciousness-raising. This does not entail, of course, that analytic philosophy must somehow "oppose" movements toward conceptual synthesis. All of metaphysics and much of science are engaged in conceptual synthesis. Just as analysis is identifiable from the beginning as a major strand or concern in Western philosophy, so also is the quest for synthesis found in all periods. Mature analytic philosophy recognizes that analysis and synthesis need one another as poles in never-ceasing interaction. Overweening claims on behalf of synthesis helped to stimulate analytic philosophy early in the twentieth century, but similar overweening attitudes, though sometimes unfortunately encountered today, have no proper place among the analysts who themselves have become dominant in English-speaking philosophy during the century.

For theologians, as for simple religious believers, then, there is nothing to fear and much to be gained from analytical philosophy. Properly construed, linguistic analysis claims only at lifting to clarity and self-awareness the complex and powerful human acts of speech. Sometimes, no doubt, self-awareness may lead some persons in good conscience to a questioning of hitherto unreflective uses of speech, perhaps to a restatement, perhaps even to abandonment. At other times self-awareness may allow for ever more meaningful reaffirmations. Analytic philosophy is not a doctrine either in favor of or opposed to religious belief or meta-

physical thinking. Its prime objective is, in the Socratic mood, the prevention of intellectual confusion due to language and the consequent "corruption of the soul."

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ANAMNESIS. The close tie of philosophical inquiry with theological and religious thinking points to a wide realm of meaning to which the term *anamnesis* ("recollection") could be applied. In many ways anthropogonic and cosmogonic theories everywhere can be interpreted as recollections of a communal group about its origins, the origins of the universe, the existing world, and the role of mankind in it. We find mythical tales of this kind in social groups everywhere, along with related ritual action. Both forms of recollection, the recital and the dramatic performance and re-creation of events in the beginning of time, can be seen as forms of the mythology of remembering. In order to be able to use the term *anamnesis* for such commemorative and re-creative acts, a careful analysis of the connotations of recollection in Plato's philosophical system is indispensable.

Plato's Epistemology of Remembering and Its Theological Basis. Plato's doctrine about the nature of the soul and its connection to the notion of the realm of ideal forms are both intertwined with the key concept of recollection. The Greek term *anamnēsis* achieves its specific meaning of "recollection" in the dialogues of Plato as that particular faculty of the soul that enables it to remember those things that it has seen when residing in the realm of eternal forms or Ideas; it is, as Plato formulates this vision, "recollection of the things formerly seen by our soul when it traveled in the divine company" (*Phaedrus* 249b). However, through repeated incarnations in new bodies (metempsychosis, "soul migration," or, rather, metensomatosis, "reembodiment") the soul forgets most of the things it has seen or contemplated in the divine sphere, as mortal bodies with their imperfections, base desires, and passions dull the sensibilities of the soul that is chained to, and thus takes on a portion of, the nature or characteristics of the material bodies. As Plato puts it through the voice of Socrates in the *Phaedo*, forgetting begins because the soul is "nailed to the body through pleasure and pain" (*Phaedo* 83d).

Thus the true knowledge of the things seen by the soul between different incarnations or materializations in consecutive bodies is never quite lost; it is hidden but still latently there, and it can be regained, recovered, brought to consciousness. It is at this point that the true vocation of the philosopher comes to the fore, because it is through his methodical questioning that the philosopher can recover such eternal truths that are beyond the varied sense experiences and thus lead the intelligent soul away from the world of varied opinions *(doxa)* to that form of true knowledge *(noēsis* or *epistēmē)* that is beyond the empirical world and that concerns the very essence of things, which is eternal, indivisible, and pure, being removed from birth and decay, from becoming, and from the temporal and spatial contingencies of all matter. The philosopher, who in Plato's thought has special abilities and is gifted through his search for eternal truths (a giftedness that, as shall be seen, has specific implications for the forms that the reincarnation of philosophers takes, thus setting him apart from the rest of mankind), can make people aware of their divine ancestry through his method of questioning, the art of midwifery (maieutic art) referred to by Socrates in the *Theaetetus*. Plato starts his reasoning with the analogy of the normal working of our memory when the mind is "pregnant" or "in labor with" a thought that presses to awareness or "birth." The philosopher as midwife merely brings the thoughts to full conscious-

ness; he does not put into the mind anything that was not there already. We therefore do not learn new things about this world from the investigations of existing matter through reflection about sense experiences, arriving at generalizations (as Aristotle would later teach); we only recollect what we always knew.

Plato thus puts mankind in a middle position between the category of all-knowing gods (after all, Zeus had swallowed Metis, intelligence personified, as the theogony of Hesiod relates and as diverse Orphic theogonies were to mythologize about the nature of the gods later) and the category of animals who have souls but do not participate in intelligence. Plato thus also answers the logical dilemma posed first by the Sophists who had maintained that either we know what we are looking for, and thus we do not need to search, or we do not know what we are trying to find and we are therefore doomed to eternal ignorance. Plato rejects the "either-or" of ignorance versus complete knowledge to which mankind would be condemned; he deals in degrees of knowledge. For Plato the device of anamnesis therefore becomes the cornerstone for the two major assertions that he puts forward in the *Phaedo* dialogue: one is the assertion that mankind has the ability to know the essence and form of things in their true reality of divine origin and that there are essences behind the contingent things of the world of the senses; the other is that there is an indivisible soul substance that participates in the divine sphere, a soul that descends from that sphere into embodiment and returns to that divine realm after death.

Before entering into a discussion of the reasoning that Plato employs to prove the existence of the metaphysical, eternal kingdom of forms or ideas, it is useful to remind ourselves of the main aim of his philosophical enterprise. It has often been assumed that the main purpose of Plato was to establish a tightly reasoned scheme for the foundation of knowledge, a knowledge understood as the theoretical justification for science. However, as Romano Guardini (1943) and others have pointed out, Plato does not look for an idealist (or rather realist) epistemology for its own sake. Rather, Plato's whole endeavor is aimed at a reality that goes beyond the knowledge that can be gained through the analysis of material forces. Furthermore, the knowledge he is aiming for is that knowledge that is a virtue, namely wisdom, and this implies the search for the original constitution of things beyond their shifting and variable appearances. The knowledge that is wisdom, being aware of its divine origin or model of which the material representations are but mirror images, would lead ultimately to the virtue that becomes the founda-

tion stone for an ethics of action in this world, namely the knowledge of truth.

What appears at first sight as a specious argument about the reality of generalizations such as those about values or virtues (justice, goodness, truth) that are not tangible in this world of the senses becomes finally a guide for action for those who have achieved the vision of the eternal forms, in particular of the ultimate virtue, wisdom, through divine inspiration. As Plato expresses it in the *Meno*, virtues are not that kind of knowledge that can be taught (as the Sophists had argued) but a knowledge that is inherent in the soul and can be recovered through recollection (these are the implications of the conclusions in *Meno* 98d–e). Knowledge does start with experience, but it does not derive from it, particularly not that knowledge that concerns the virtues. It is rather a knowledge, as Plato puts it, "which we own from our background" (*oikeia epistēmē; Phaedo* 75). We see again that the foundations of such ultimate knowing are put into the sphere of the divine through the still unproved hypothesis about the nature of the soul, its origin and fate before and after death of the earthly body.

Taken from this vantage point, the suggestion put forward by Guardini (that Plato's notion about the immortality of the soul and the concomitant notion that the soul is only passing through the stages of corporeal incarnation in order to arrive at its true home denigrate historicity and the uniqueness of the individual's existence) seems not quite as pronounced when the ethical orientation of Plato is taken into consideration. If a person through recollection can find the insight and vision of the ultimate foundations of virtues, he would, so Plato repeatedly argues, strive to fulfill the requirements of a virtuous life. Besides, as we will see, Plato also holds out different fates for each soul, according to its conduct in this life, in regard to the form and duration of reincarnations.

We thus see that in the dialogues of the middle period (from the *Meno* and *Symposium* to the *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*, and *Republic*) the search for the foundations of the knowing subject (the soul with intelligence and possessed with a drive to find its home) as well as of the known things (the objects in the tangible world as well as the generalizations of the mind, namely the virtues), of the subject and object of the epistemological equation, are but the tools for establishing the truth about the reality of the divine sphere and the grounding of subject and object in it. When this has happened and when the total structure of reality is known, action would be informed by this insight. For Plato the proof of the ability and effectiveness of *anamnēsis* as a faculty

of the soul and mind of mankind therefore becomes the key for the proof of the kingdom of ideal forms and of ultimate truth.

The focal point, where the argument about the immortality of the soul and its reincarnations is joined to the proof through the notion of *anamnēsis*, occurs in the dialogue that is set around the occasion of the imminent death of Socrates, the *Phaedo*. Socrates has just proved by analogy that the soul is immortal, everlasting, and reincarnated in successive bodies: in much the same way, as the unity of the personality is still there through the various stages of sleep and waking, the soul must be a unifying principle surpassing birth and death. It just participates for a while in the life of mortal matter but discards the body like a worn garment and returns from where it came.

Socrates uses the further analogy that if there were only a movement from birth to death, all life would come to an end. There must be a countermovement from death to life, and this is the reincarnation of the soul after death into new bodies (*Phaedo* 70c–72a). Plato reformulates here insights that were common stock since the teachings of Empedocles and Heraclitus about the impermanence of things, of the constant change of conditions and aggregates, and about the cyclical repetition of natural processes, an impermanence of the world of experience that, however, has an underlying unchanging structure. While Ionian nature philosophy looked for the underlying permanency in the laws of matter, Plato makes the radical change by asserting that what is permanent is the perceiving subject and at the same time the ideal form behind the empirical reality. Since matter is perpetually dying and being reborn in different form, Plato declares that a permanent reality can only be an immaterial one that is only accessible to pure thought.

It is now up to Plato, through the words of Socrates, to prove these assertions. Kebes, one of the dialogue partners, gives him the entry by referring to Socrates' often-used adage that "learning is nothing but remembering" (*Phaedo* 72e). This refers to the previous experiment, where Socrates had an untutored slave arrive at the proof of a Pythagorean mathematical paradigm (*Meno* 82ff.). The objects of mathematics are similar to the moral forms, the virtues, and it is indeed these that Plato recognizes as having the necessary attributes. As Cornford pointed out, this implies that memory, which contains such knowledge, cannot be a personal or individual memory but must by necessity be an impersonal memory: all individuals can potentially arrive at the same truth, the only difference being to which extent the latent knowledge has been recovered (Cornford,

1952, p. 56). This might imply that Plato's notion of the soul as perceiving agent is akin to the Hindu proposition (of the Upaniṣads) that the *ātman* (personal soul) and *brahman* (universal soul) are identical. As shall be shown, there are some reservations with this view, as Plato also has recourse to the myth of retribution after death and to the karmic notion of the influence of the conduct in the present lifetime upon the form of reincarnation, as extolled in the *Phaedrus*.

Before embarking upon that discussion, I shall return to the *Phaedo*, where Socrates now resumes his proof about the latent memory of the soul: he states that our ability to discern equal things (and contrasts as well) presupposes the idea of equality itself (or of sameness and difference). In the same way as there is no empirical equivalent to a geometrical form (as proved in the *Meno*), there are no two things in our empirical world that are exactly the same. But the sight of approximately equal things revives the thought of perfect equality, the knowledge of which must be inborn, be previous to sense experience (*Phaedo* 75c–76d). This part of the discussion of anamnesis ends in the assertion that the essence of the soul is of the same kind as the essence of the object of thought processes, the idea. True knowledge surpasses the empirical in two ways: from its object, it is the idea; from its subject, it is the pure thought of the soul, both being nonempirical, immortal, indivisible, and indestructible (*Phaedo* 79a–c).

Gnosticism, Manichaeism, Sufism, and Qabbalah. Plato's thought system underwent various modifications in the following centuries that cannot be followed here in a systematic manner. Under the impact of Oriental religions and influenced by Christian soteriology, Hellenistic thinking brought forth a number of doctrines that occupied themselves much with the question of the nature of the soul and its relation to the body as well as with its fate after death. These various doctrines, which in the first few centuries after the beginning of the Christian era were considered by the church fathers as a dangerous challenge to Christian orthodoxy, are generally labeled the gnostic movement. The aim of this many-sided movement of speculative thought was cogently summed up in the following statement: gnosis is "the knowledge of who we were, what we have become, where we were, into what place we have been thrown . . . what is birth, what is rebirth" (Clement, *Excerpta ex Theodoto* 78.2).

Although the term *gnōsis* connotes "knowledge," the gnostics meant by it not the intellectual process but rather wisdom gained through mystical insight or enlightenment by an immediate vision of truth. For the gnostics, this knowledge was designed to help to lib-

erate as well as to redeem mankind from its confinement in a material world. For those men who possessed the knowledge of the true nature of the world and of the soul, the knowledge itself is the redeeming factor, or as one of the tractates found at Nag Hammadi expressed it, if anyone has gnosis, he knows from where he comes and where he goes, and, so the *Gospel of Truth* continues, "he knows like someone who was drunk and has become sober from his drunkenness, and, restored again to himself, has again set his own in order." The same text refers to ignorance as forgetfulness and annihilation. The gnostics believed that there were three diverse classes of people: the elect (the pneumatics or "spirituals") had divine inspiration; a second class were the psychics, who possessed soul but as yet no insight; the third class, the carnal ones, were beyond redemption.

Without delving deeper into the often contradictory tales of cosmogony and anthropogony that the diverse gnostic schools developed, the basic doctrine is one of the fall of parts of the light through error, variously attributed, into the world of matter and coming to rest in primordial man. The whole soteriology of the gnostic movements is then concerned with the reascent of the light to its original source. However, the soul, which is the light particle lost in the world of matter, cannot achieve this ascent unaided, because she is drunken or asleep, as the abundant metaphorical images put it. To this purpose the godhead sends out the redeemer, identified with Christ in Christian circles.

It is the prerogative of the adherent of the gnostic movement to be awakened, to have insight into the process of the fall of the light and the redemption attempt of Christ. However, he has to prove his mettle in the fight in this world, in his fight with matter, in particular against the snares and traps of bodily passions. The purpose of all the ascetic practices with which gnosticism abounds is the training of the spiritual or pneumatic aspects of oneself for the final ascent to the divine light (Gr., *plērōma*). One of the major doctrines of most gnostic schools was the strong reliance on self-redemption through the insight that the soul of the elect had gained through instant revelation. It seems clear from the sources that the concept of self-redemption of the man of superior knowledge and the redemption through a helper, the redeemer sent by the deity, remained one of the points of contention between different gnostic schools (and remains also a problem for modern research into gnosticism).

The mythology of remembering, waking up from sleep or drunkenness, is put into different terms in the doctrines of the Manichaeans, who start from the primordial dualism of two forces, light and darkness, spirit and matter (due to Iranian-Zoroastrian influence, no

doubt; see Widengren, 1961). Matter in this system desires to engulf the light, and after succeeding in the battle, light has to send out various messengers and emissaries or mercenaries who, however, get trapped by the forces of darkness. One of these emissaries is primordial man, Adam, who, when put into sleep or unconsciousness by engulfing matter, is wakened by a call from above. Here the strategies of light are finally victorious, as matter that has partaken of light and thus has the powers of light, its own enemy "ingested," as it were, is defeated from inside. But before this plan of light can succeed, matter has established its rule by creating the figure of libido or concupiscence, which through constant copulation binds the light particles to bodies (the cannibalistic and sexual stigmata that remain with mankind as reminders of their beastly descent from demonic powers). But light now sends out further emissaries to free the divine spark that is indestructibly present in Adam and mankind from the world of demons by reminding Adam and mankind of their own true essence (see Widengren, 1961; Puech, 1937).

Although the Manichaean system appears generally more clear in its exposition than other gnostic movements, all of them are often intellectually and ritually contradictory; they remained hybrid systems due to their tendency of syncretistic merging of various religious and cultural traditions, ranging from Greek philosophy, Jewish biblical traditions, Christian eschatology, and Persian dualism (a variability reflected in the many languages in which the documents of these traditions have come down to us, from Greek to Uighur, Coptic, and Chinese). All gnostic traditions are artificial mythologies and are a far cry from the intellectual enterprise of Plato. This was clearly perceived by the late follower of Plato, Plotinus (third century CE), for whom the world was, if not perfect, at least beautiful, and man a complete vessel, though needing perfection. The whole atmosphere of the doctrine of forgetting of the gnostics seems often contrived and complicated as well as convoluted beyond logical needs and far indeed from the splendid vision of the power of the mind as taught by Plato, for whom the world with its beauty of bodies was after all the instigator of the drive of Eros to strive for perfection.

A far more consistent religious principle arose with the emergence of Islamic mysticism, or Sufism (*taṣawwuf*), in the eighth century. The original core of Sufism is the asceticism of a life in poverty through which man is better able to meditate on the Qur'ān and so to draw near to God through prayer or repetitive chanting of religious formulas. (This process is called *dhikr*, lit., "remembrance.") The formulas were accompanied by a variety of rules about body posture and breathing

techniques. All these techniques aim to empty the mind so that it can be filled with the presence of God. [See Dhikr.]

For most of Islamic history, the Ṣūfīs were anathema to orthodox theology, as they stressed inner qualities more than outer action, the practical example more than strict adherence to the letter of the law propounded by theologians, and the spirit of the principles of Islam more than the strict observance of ritual.

This tendency led to statements that outraged traditionalists, such as that of al-Ḥallāj, crucified in 922, who proclaimed: "I am the truth." In the same spirit, Ibn al-'Arabī, whose work influenced the later development of Qabbalah considerably, once stated: "My heart has become capable of every form . . . a temple for idols, and the pilgrim's kaaba, and the tables of the Torah and the book of the Qu'ran. I follow the religion of love" (trans. Reynold A. Nicholson). While al-'Arabī's statement may be interpreted as simple universalism or pantheism, in connection with the disdaining of bookish knowledge, sayings of this kind are more akin to the jolting of the mind as practiced by Taoists and Zen Buddhists, who also seek through the disorientation of habitual thinking to open the mind to ultimate truth. It is in this vein that we have to take the following statement by Abū Sa'īd of Nishapur: "Books, ye are excellent guides, but it is absurd to trouble about a guide after the goal has been reached"; or again, "I practiced recollection [dhikr] uninterruptedly . . . only after all these trials do we realize self-conceit" (Nicholson, 1921, pp. 15, 21). Such utterances of paradox align the Ṣūfīs squarely with the Greek Cynics; their varied expressions of the yearning for unification with the divine through love show their Platonic affinity.

The techniques of dhikr were intended to induce a form of ecstasy or trance in which the soul would then be able to conduct a dialogue with God (the final aim of "the search for the real [al-Ḥaqq]," as al-Ghazālī called it). As an alternative there exists the technique of fikr, meaning contemplation and reflection. The whole idea of recollection appears most clearly in poetic formulations such as the following by Ibn al-Fārid (1181–1235): "In memory of the Beloved we quaffed a vintage that made us drunk before the creation of the vine." The commentator Nābulusī says that this means nothing but that the soul was intoxicated with the wine of divine love during its existence before the creation of the body (Nicholson, 1921, pp. 184ff.). Ṣūfī brotherhoods can be differentiated as to their final aim: some aim for ilhāmīyah, or inspiration by God, others for ittiḥādīyah, the mystical union with God.

Many Ṣūfīs were definite adherents of a theory of transmigration of souls (tanāsukh), though there were exceptions. The doctrine of metempsychosis was also adhered to by other Muslim groups, such as the Nuṣayrīyah, the Kurds, and the Druze, as was reported by the historian of religion Shahrastānī, from Khorasan (1076–1153). The Ṣūfīs adhered to the theory of the transmigration of souls because they believed that before the creation of bodies the souls were illuminated by divine light; therefore affinal souls can smell each another out, as was formulated by Abū Sa'īd (Nicholson, 1921, p. 56). This notion appears clearly also in the poetry of Ibn al-Fārid, who like many other Ṣūfī mystics accords great importance and proof for the preexistence of the soul to dream states: "In dreams the soul knows itself as it was in the state of preexistence" (v. 669), or again, "In the world of reminiscence the soul has her ancient knowledge" (v. 759; Nicholson, 1921, pp. 265).

In any case, the aim of the Ṣūfī is the unification with God and a cessation of transmigration and, by total absorption into the deity, the extinction of existence (fanā'). Some of the most evocative lines of poetry combining the idea of fanā' with that of tanāsukh have come down to us from Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, who founded the Mevlevī order in Konya in the late thirteenth century: "I died as mineral and became a plant, I died as plant and rose to animal." This poem ends in the rapt cry "Oh, let me not exist!" (The Ascending Soul, trans. Nicholson, 1964, p. 103).

The mystical tendencies of Islamic Sufism—such as its emotional and inner devotion to the divine agency, contemplative and prayerful, together with a strong ethical orientation that could almost be labeled pietist—passed relatively early into the developing Jewish Qabbalah. One of the most influential works in this connection was the Ḥovot ha-levavot (Duties of the Heart) by Baḥye ibn Paquda in 1080, translated into Hebrew in 1161. The underlying theme of this work finds its strongest expression in the later Lurianic movement as well as in the Hasidic tradition in Spain and in central and eastern Europe. For Paquda there are two kinds of duty: one that relates to the body and that concerns man's overt actions, and the other that relates to the heart and concerns man's inner life. To the first belong the ethical commands of the Torah, the observance of the Sabbath, prayer, and charity. To the latter belong the belief in the existence and singleness of God, the fear and love of him as well as the trust in him.

Paquda warned against overemphasis on the duties of the body, thus advocating a countermovement against halakhic orthodoxy. The aim of life is spiritual perfection and ultimate union and communion with God. The way to this is through the ten gates, such as sincerity of purpose, humility, repentance, self-examination, asceticism, and love of God. In accordance with Platonic prin-

ciples, the soul is of celestial origin, placed into material bodies where it begins to forget its nature and mission. The soul receives great help from the intellect, since in it all the duties of the heart are grounded. There has to be a perfect correspondence of behavior and conscience. Paquda is far from advocating asceticism but opts for the middle way: live in temperance but fulfill your duties in social life (see Scholem, 1954, 1965).

There are considerable differences between Sufism and Qabbalah, in particular in regard to the strong reliance on exegesis among Jewish thinkers and in regard to the downplaying of ascetic practices. However, Qabbalah took some notions of metempsychosis, which play a great role in the later movement in Safad, from Sufism. Early Qabbalah of the twelfth century is more restrictive in the use of the term: it uses the notion of *gilgul* or *ha'ataqah* ("transference") as a translation of the Arabic *tanāsukh* (which in turn is also a translation of the Stoic concept of *aposakatastasis*) for certain, mostly sexual, offenses. The decisive turn occurs in the sixteenth century, when a system of moral causes and physical effects, similar to the Hindu *karman*, takes root. The other very specific Jewish notion concerns the metaphorical equivalence of the exile of the soul from its divine spiritual abode and the exile of the chosen people from its homeland. [*See* Exile.]

Behind the Jewish idea of transmigration stands the doctrine of the creation of the world as a series of emanations from the godhead (Ein Sof), which is symbolized by the ten *sefirot* that contain as vessels the divine light. In particular the tenth *sefirah*, the female Shekhinah, is responsible for receiving and distributing the divine light-essence to earth. It is through man's sinful nature and his fall from grace that the energy flow was interrupted, leading to disharmony as well as evil in the world. The deed is traced to primordial man, Adam Qadmon, whose fall brought about the breaking of the vessels, so that the divine essence became dispersed in innumerable fragments as light particles, which are contaminated with matter (the closeness to some gnostic notions is noticeable). This basic system was further elaborated by the Palestinian qabbalist Isaac Luria (1534–1572) but also flourished in Italy.

It is with the thirteenth-century founder of Ashkenazic Hasidism, El'azar of Worms, that we find one of the strongest reminiscences of the doctrine of transmigration and Platonic *anamnēsis*. In an interpretation of the *Midrash on the Creation of the Child*, he expostulates that after the guardian angel has given the newborn child a tap on the upper lip, it forgets all the infinite knowledge it had acquired before its birth in the celestial house of learning. And why does the child forget? asks El'azar. Because, he answers, if the child did not forget, the course of the world would drive it mad in the light of what it knows from its former existence in divine grace. (The relation to Job is evident.)

The whole purpose of man's existence on earth is the restoration of the ideal order and the collection of the pure divine light in the vessels. Salvation thus means nothing but restitution or reintegration of the original whole *(tiqqun)*. In Lurianic Qabbalah, transmigration, as for some Ṣūfī brotherhoods, is not just a result of evil or of the sinful nature of man, but it is actually one chance, a boon, to achieve the goal of self-emancipation, defined here as being freed from transmigration. The souls of the emancipated ones then wait, each in its blessed house, to be reunited with the soul of Adam, the first man.

However, and here we also get a unique variation of the theme of transmigration and redemption, while the purpose of reincarnation is always purification or atonement for the sins of mankind, the role of the suffering of the righteous is of the greatest importance, because they help with the restoration of the universe. Here the universal effect of good deeds and thoughts, of a devout life in the pietist sense, is combined with the ancient notion of the efficacy of ritual to restore the proper functioning of universal forces and energies. The notion of metempsychosis, also called "impregnation" (*'ibbur* in early Qabbalah), is taken to its furthest extent when it is stated that a soul, in particular that of an ethically advanced person, can enter, even temporarily, another man's body and thus help his soul come closer to perfection. The universe can only be restored to its original purity when all people have reached perfection. In spite of this seemingly unified system, we find in Qabbalah the same major splits of interpretation as in the Ṣūfī tradition. Two basic aims are given as the highest goal for the life of man: Maimonides advocates the knowledge of God, while his son opts for union with God. We thus find in all traditions so far discussed the same split between knowledge and devotion as the main aims of life.

Australian Aboriginal Beliefs in Ritual Action and Rebirth Processes. In most systems discussed so far we find a tendency to identify the realm of the spirit with the notion of essence or form, abstracted from all material discrete reality: the bodies of humans and other animate beings are perceived as prisons for the divine element, life-force, or soul. Matter is thus seen as inimical to the soul's attainment of its true state, in which it is a part of, or is united with, the godhead.

The religious systems of the Australian Aborigines developed a different, almost diametrically opposed, notion. Here the divine element is embodied in a diversity

of material objects, ranging from features of the geographical landscape to such items as bull-roarers. Man himself is a divine being and agent, either as an individual or as a member of a social group; and particular social groups as much as particular individuals are identified or correlated with features in the landscape. The social groups such as clans are themselves sacred corporations in perpetuity. The sacred nature of material items such as bull-roarers is made clear through their use: they are efficacious for the continued fertility of all nature, including mankind, because they are thought of as endowed with the power of the culture heroes of the Dreaming.

In a similar fashion, the whole earth and all its features, such as rocks, indentations, but especially waterholes, are considered sacred substances or emanations of the creative thoughts of the ancestral heroes and divinities. The creator ancestors walked the earth in primordial times and created every animate and inanimate object through externalizing, objectifying, and materializing their thoughts in the act of dreaming. Man is the paramount agent who either through ceremonies or dreaming guarantees the continuation of these creative acts. [See Dreaming, The.]

Aboriginal religious thought thus perceives a very intimate relation between man and environment in what has become known as a totemic thought system, where each individual and each group becomes closely linked to a feature of the external world (landscape, plants, animals). While these features of the external world are the self-manifestations of the creator deities of the Dreaming, man has to identify through ritual and through dreaming with these features and internalize them. The continuation of the visible reality depends on the meticulous performance of rites at the ceremonial centers of the diverse totemic ancestor beings; individuals and groups are thus (as reincarnations of the supernatural beings) guardians and connective links to the eternal order that, though once established in its final form, needs the constant renewal in the present. This belief explains also the frequent handling of sacred objects (for which the Aranda term *tjurunga* has become synonymous) by young initiates, who through this action try to keep in touch with the essence of that being of which they are the spiritual double themselves (see Elkin, 1954, p. 186).

There exists in Aboriginal thinking no clear delineation between eternity and temporality, between now and the past: the eternal order is not only the basis for the re-creation through ritual in the present, as laid down by the law of the ancestor deities, but is inseparably linked with the present through the sacred agency of mankind, which carries within its individuals and

groups the spark of life derived from the original creative beings through constant reincarnations. In short, in ritual action, eternity is here and now and merging with the present. The cosmic dimension of the maintenance of the world through ritual finds its correlate in the notion of the constant reincarnation of a personal soul-entity. In most Aboriginal systems of thought the spiritual essence enters man through dreaming at a totemic center. These totemic centers are the places into which the ancestor spirits disappeared when they had finished creation and to which the souls of the dead depart and become deposited, there to await rebirth. When a man sleeps at such a place, the spiritual essence or soul that has been deposited in these centers enters him through dreaming, and the male transfers the new soul to his female partner during procreation.

The self-identification of the living persons and groups of Aboriginal society with the ancestors and their spiritual essence is thus achieved through dreaming at the very places where the divine entities externalized and materialized their own thoughts in dreaming in very concrete and substantial form. This identity of substance of the living world and of man is often expressed by Aborigines when they refer to the sacred totemic places as "my dreaming there." Thus dreaming, life essence or soul, and the supreme creator deities are sometimes called by the same term. This self-identification of the individual and of groups with the externalizations of the ancestral heroes, be they features of the landscape or living creatures in nature, is expressed through the concept of the birth and rebirth at particular centers and, more pointedly, through initiation rituals. The aim of initiation rituals is not only to remind the young initiand of the significance of the sacred landscape but even more to teach him his own lost knowledge, to actually make him aware of his own sacredness (females are in some parts of Australia considered sacred by nature).

As each individual represents the reborn ancestor, he is thus learning what he always actually knew but forgot when he rested in the spirit places after death in his last incarnation. As T. G. H. Strehlow put it about the understanding of this process among the Aranda: "At the time of birth the totemic ancestor who has undergone re-incarnation is totally unaware of his former glorious existence. For him the preceding months have been a 'sleep and forgetting'. If he is born as a boy, the old men will later on initiate him and reintroduce him into the ancient ceremonies which he himself had instituted in his previous extence" (Strehlow, 1947, p. 93).

We would scarcely find anywhere else a stronger resemblance to the Platonic notion of *anamnēsis*, yet in Australian Aboriginal thought the living human is even

more pronouncedly part of the divine, being, if not the divinity, at least the ancestor hero. When a grown adult performs the increase ceremonies as laid down by the ancestor deities, he is reperforming his own law, for he, in his former incarnation as ancestor, had a part in devising the law.

It is from this vantage point that the merging of the present and the past—of concrete reality and actions within it with the original and therefore not only past but ever-present essential foundations of reality—can be understood. As Strehlow has it: "The whole countryside is his living, age-old family tree. The story of his own totemic ancestor is to the native the account of his own doings at the beginning of time, at the dim dawn of life, when the world as he knows it now was being shaped and moulded by all-powerful hands. He himself has played a part in that first glorious adventure, a part smaller or greater according to the original rank of the ancestor of whom he is the present re-incarnated form" (ibid., pp. 30–31).

At death the immortal part of the human reincarnation returns to the abode of the primordial state, either beyond the sea, in the sky, or under the ground. While the belief in reincarnation is general and widespread among Australian Aborigines, the rebirth is perceived not as that of a previous particular human personality but as one of primordial existence as creative agent. There exists no retribution for activities in this life, though the ancestor heroes were not without fault or blame. But even their deeds that are wrong by the standards they laid down themselves are not judged in an afterlife, nor do they influence reincarnation.

However, present Aborigines realize and express the idea that their ancestor deities may sometimes have gone wrong and may sometimes have been killed for their wrongdoing by the original incarnations of present-day people. Although killed, these ancestor heroes did not die in spirit; as the Berndts note, they remain part of the "Eternal Dreaming stream" (Berndt and Berndt, 1977, p. 418). The religious systems of all Aboriginal groups seem to be what W. E. H. Stanner once called an "affirmation of life" (see Stanner, 1959–1963). There is certainly no trace of asceticism or denial of the body to be found in Aboriginal beliefs. There is no need for such abasement, for the divine eternity is concretely realized in material form in this world and can always be made present through ritual action.

The comparison with the Platonic system of recollection cannot be fully developed (see also Eliade, 1973, p. 58–59). Yet one point is worth emphasizing: for Aborigines, the manifestations of the ancestor heroes of the Dreaming, such as features of the landscape, become the outward sign to recall the deeds of these ancestors.

This comes close to Plato's notion about the efficacy of objects of beauty to arouse in humans the desire of Eros to attain absolute beauty, the desire to attain something that one lacks, in particular to attain immortality.

It might not be too farfetched to extend this philosophical interpretation to the mytho-ritualistic identification that the Aborigine intends when handling sacred objects, performing the ancient sacred increase rituals or learning about his oneness with the Dreaming and its objects or emanations. This, and more, is revealed to the Aborigine in the long drawn-out process of initiation and achievement of adulthood and is regularly made clear in ritual action, when each participant becomes an ancestor. Each, too, will thereby re-create the universe, but none will attempt to change it. The ritual recollection of the Australian Aborigines and of other tribal societies is replaced in Plato's system by the philosopher through the *daimōn* of Eros. Both forms of recollection seem to share the same aim: through ritual the paradigmatic model is repeated over and over again and made present and efficacious forever; through the drive of Eros the philosopher aims at gaining what he has not yet obtained, namely, immortality and divine status. Both Eros and ritual action are creative.

A member of the Murinbata once said to Stanner: "White man got no dreaming, him go 'nother way. White man, him go different. Him go road belong himself." Our comparison about the notion of recollection from Platonic *anamnēsis* to Aboriginal beliefs in reincarnation and remembering of their own divine status has shown that a reminder of our own roots might instill in us a sense of humility. Were we to recollect our Platonic heritage, we might perceive the Australian Aborigine as a related soul. We might realize that Europe since ancient times has been working toward the same goal as the Aborigines: only our methods differ.

[*See also* Soul *and* Knowledge and Ignorance.]

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KLAUS-PETER KOEPPING

'ANAN BEN DAVID (fl. Baghdad, second half of the eighth century CE), titular founder of the Karaites, a Jewish sect. According to a rabbinic-Jewish (Rabbinite) tradition cited first by the twelfth-century Karaite author Eliyyahu ben Avraham, 'Anan was rejected for the position of exilarch (secular head of the Jewish community in Iraq and its representative before the Muslim caliph's court) on the ground of heretical tendencies. When the office went to his younger brother Ḥananyah, 'Anan's followers (styled Ananites, or 'Ānānīyah in Arabic) declared him their own exilarch. Since this action amounted to open defiance of the caliph's customary right to confirm a newly elected exilarch, 'Anan was cast into prison and faced execution. A Muslim fellow-prisoner (according to Jewish sources, Abū Ḥanīfah, the founder of the Ḥanafī school of Muslim jurisprudence) advised him to bribe his way before the caliph and then to plead that the Ananites were a religious denomination distinct from the Rabbinites and were therefore entitled to have their own exilarch. 'Anan followed this advice, was acquitted, and was set free.

The historicity of this account is open to challenge, however. Opposition to postbiblical, or Talmudic, tradition (so-called oral law, distinct from written law in the Old Testament) and the cry "Back to the Bible!" antedated 'Anan by several centuries, and for the period immediately before him, the names of some leaders of

such antitraditionalist movements have been preserved. These movements were found mostly in the outlying provinces of the Muslim empire, among Jewish communities apparently composed to a considerable degree of emigrants from metropolitan Iraq; they belonged to the poorer classes of artisans and farm laborers and felt themselves sorely oppressed by the rabbinic religious and secular bureaucracy, which overburdened them with special taxes imposed for its own maintenance.

What seems to be certain is that 'Anan was a man of aristocratic Rabbinite descent and of considerable learning and that he was the first to lend these two prestigious qualifications to the contemporary sectarian leadership. He was also apparently the first to compose a comprehensive scholarly code of sectarian (nonrabbinic) law based formally only on the Bible. This was written in Aramaic, the language of much of the Talmud, but is known under the Hebrew title *Sefer ha-mitsvot* (Book of Precepts). Only fragments of this work have been discovered so far. Containing concise formulations of law, but no polemics against rabbinic dogma or law, they reveal 'Anan as a rigorous and ascetic teacher rather than an ambitious seeker after secular power.

That 'Anan was influenced to some extent by earlier antitraditionalist teachings seems fairly certain, although this influence should not be exaggerated. He was a self-assured and independent thinker. Later Karaite scholars disagreed with him on many points of law and chided him for what they considered his excessive borrowing from rabbinic law. His predilection for the analogical method in deducing new rules from the biblical text may indicate some influence from Muslim jurisprudence.

Later accounts credit 'Anan with a work on the transmigration of souls and state that he regarded Jesus and Muḥammad as inspired prophets sent to their respective nations, but these are not supported by any reliable evidence.

The Ananites, never numerous, were eventually absorbed by the Karaites. 'Anan's direct male descendants bore the honorific title of prince *(nasi')* and were treated accordingly by the Karaites, but they apparently wielded little actual power and, with one or two exceptions, did not distinguish themselves as scholars.

[*See also* Karaites.]

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ANAT was a Canaanite goddess of violence and sexuality, the consort of Baal. She was also called "sister of Baal," but this expression probably indicates that she was Baal's consort and equal, not his biological sister. In Hellenistic times Anat was fused with the Canaanite goddess Astarte to become Atargatis, known to the Romans as Dea Syria.

There is a dispute as to whether her name means "provider" or "sign [of Baal]." The latter would square nicely with the general ancient Near Eastern tendency to see the male deity as rather statically embodying a given reality (e.g., warfare, fertility, lordship), whereas his female counterpart embodies that reality hypostatically; that is, she brings the quality abstracted in the god into concrete action vis-à-vis the world. Indeed, Anat's Carthaginian counterpart, Tinnit, is called "face [i.e., manifestation] of Baal," and Astarte is called "name [i.e., externalized reality] of Baal."

It may be precisely this phenomenon that explains what has been a puzzling facet of the Baal-Anat texts from Ugarit in Syria. In battle Baal often achieves supremacy so that he can exercise his control of the weather and bring about agricultural fertility. [*See* Baal.] But in some texts his often bloodthirsty consort Anat is portrayed fighting the same battles as Baal, especially in the struggles against Yamm ("sea") and Mot ("death"). In a sense, Baal is the "fight" for fertility; Anat is his "fighting" for fertility.

One battle scene, in which Anat fastens severed heads and hands to her waist and "plunges knee-deep in gore," ironically provides us with some of the loveliest lines of Ugaritic poetry. Anat draws water to wash off the blood:

> Dew of sky, richness of earth,
> spray of the Rider on the Clouds,
> dew that the skies do shed,
> spray that is shed by the stars.

The sexuality of Anat is not clear in the Ugaritic lit-

erature. Fragmentary texts seem to describe her passionate lovemaking with Baal, and there seems to be some indication that they mate in the forms of a bull and a heifer. "Bull" is properly the epithet of El, but the bull as an ancient symbol of fertility would be appropriate also to Baal.

A very different and probably secondary image of Anat is to be found in the Ugaritic tale of Aqhat, where Anat and Baal are almost in an adversary position. Sonless Danel implores his patron Baal for male offspring. Baal intercedes with El, and Aqhat is born to the house of Danel. Later in the story the vulcan god Kothar-wa-Hasis presents Danel with a magnificent bow and arrows, which Danel gives to his son Aqhat. Anat becomes infatuated with these items and tries to con them away from Aqhat with promises of riches and immortality. Spurned, she has her henchman Yatpan kill Aqhat. A period of agricultural infertility immediately afflicts the earth. Danel's daughter Pughat confronts Yatpan and he confesses his deed, but here the tablet breaks off.

During the Hyksos period, Anat, in her warlike aspect, was adopted into the Egyptian pantheon, and she was a personal military patron of some of the nineteenth-dynasty pharaohs, especially Ramses II. On one fine Theban stela she is depicted enthroned, wearing a long gown, and receiving offerings. In her left hand she holds a spear and shield; in her right, she brandishes a mace-ax. In Egypt her consort was Seth, who in turn was identified with the Canaanite Baal.

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ANCESTORS. [*This entry comprises two articles: Ancestor Worship and Mythic Ancestors. The first examines the concepts underlying the worship of ancestors; the second surveys the role of mythic ancestors in various traditions where they play an essential part.*]

Ancestor Worship

The term *ancestor worship* designates rites and beliefs concerning deceased kinsmen. Rites of ancestor worship include personal devotions, domestic rites, the ancestral rites of a kinship group such as a lineage, periodic rites on the death day of the deceased, and annual rites for collectivity of ancestors. Generally excluded from the category are rites for the dead having no specific reference to kinsmen, and beliefs about the dead in general that lack any special reference to kinship.

General Characteristics and Research Problems. Ancestor worship has attracted the enduring interest of scholars in many areas of the study of religion. In the late nineteenth century, it was identified as the most basic form of all religion, and subsequent studies of the subject in specific areas have provided a stimulating point of access to related problems of religion, society, and culture.

The worship of ancestors is closely linked to cosmology and worldview, to ideas of the soul and the afterlife, and to a society's regulation of inheritance and succession. In East Asia ancestor worship is found combined with the practice of Buddhism, and ancestral rites compose a major part of the practice of Confucianism. It is generally acknowledged that ancestor worship functions to uphold the authority of elders, to support social control, and to foster conservative and traditionalist attitudes. In addition, ancestor worship is clearly linked to an ethic of filial piety and obedience to elders.

The institution of ancestor worship is properly regarded as a religious practice, not as a religion in itself. It is generally carried out by kinship groups and seldom has a priesthood separable from them. It is limited to the practice of the ethnic group; there is no attempt to proselytize outsiders. Its ethical dimension primarily refers to the proper conduct of family or kinship relations. It does not have formal doctrine as such; where texts exist, these are mainly liturgical manuals. In most cases ancestor worship is not the only religious practice of a society; rather, it exists as part of a more comprehensive religious system.

The meaning of *worship* in *ancestor worship* is problematic. Ancestor worship takes a variety of forms in different areas, and its attitudinal characteristics vary accordingly. The ancestors may be regarded as possessing power equivalent to that of a deity and hence may be accorded cult status and considered able to influence society to the same extent as its deities. Typically, the conception of ancestors is strongly influenced by ideas of other supernaturals in the society's religious system. Ancestors may be prayed to as having the power to grant boons or allay misfortune, but their effectiveness

is regarded as naturally limited by the bonds of kinship. Thus, a member of a certain lineage prays only to the ancestors of that lineage; it would be regarded as non-sensical to pray to ancestors of any other lineage. Accordingly, members of other lineages are excluded from the ancestral rites of kinship groups of which they are not members. The religious attitudes involved in the worship of ancestors include filial piety, respect, sympathy, and sometimes, fear.

The rites of death, including funerary and mortuary rituals, are regarded as falling within the purview of ancestor worship only when memorial rites beyond the period of death and disposition of the corpse are carried out as a regular function of a kinship group. Thus, the funerary rites and occasional memorials common in Europe and the United States are not regarded as evidence of ancestor worship. However, when ancestors are collectively and regularly accorded cult status by their descendants, acting as members of a kinship group, such practices are regarded as ancestor worship.

Dead or stillborn children, miscarriages, and abortions are generally conceptually distinguished from ancestors. For the most part these exceptional deaths are accorded very abbreviated funeral rites, if any, and they generally receive little memorial ritual. Like those who die in youth before marriage, their fate is regarded as especially pitiable and as a source of possible harm to the living.

The study of ancestor worship involves several different questions. How are the ancestors viewed in relation to their descendants? Is ancestor worship in some sense a reflection of actual relations between fathers and sons? In what circumstances are the ancestors viewed as capable of harming their descendants, and is the ancestors' benevolence or malevolence linked to descendants' sense of guilt toward them? What can be learned about relations of jural authority from studies of ancestor worship? What is the character of domestic rites? These often seem to reflect a feeling that the dead are still "living" in some sense, that they can be contacted and their advice sought. Studies in this area illumine attitudes toward death and reveal a very general perception that the dead gradually lose their individual characteristics and merge into an impersonal collectivity. A recent topic of research concerns the differing attitudes of women and men toward ancestors.

Ancestor Worship in the History of the Study of Religion. In *Principles of Sociology* (1877) Herbert Spencer wrote that "ancestor worship is the root of every religion." According to his view, the cult of heroes originated in the deification of an ancestor, and in fact all deities originate by an analogous process. Spencer's eu-

hemerist theory rested on the idea, familiar in the scholarship of his day, that religion as a whole has a common origin from which its many forms derive. Knowledge of this original form would provide the key to understanding all subsequent developments.

Somewhat earlier Fustel de Coulanges wrote in *La cité antique* (1864) that the ancient societies of Greece and Rome were founded upon ancestor worship. Furthermore, when the beliefs and practices of ancestor worship were weakened, society as a whole was entirely transformed. In the view of de Coulanges, Greece and Rome were founded upon a common belief in the soul's continued existence after the body's death. The family that continued to worship its ancestors became society's basic unit, expanding gradually to the clan divisions of gens, phratry, and tribe. Eventually cities were founded, governed as quasi-religious associations by patrician families.

In *Totem and Taboo* (1913), Sigmund Freud postulated that the belief that the living can be harmed by the dead serves to reduce guilt experienced toward the dead. That is, in kinship relations characterized by conscious affection there is inevitably a measure of hostility; however, this hostility conflicts with the conscious ideal of affectionate relations and hence must be repressed. Repressed hostility is then projected onto the dead and takes the form of the belief that the dead are malevolent and can harm the living.

Meyer Fortes considerably refined Freud's hypothesis on the basis of African material. In *Oedipus and Job in West African Religion* (1959), Fortes found that among the Tallensi belief in the continued authority of ancestors, rather than fear of them, is the principle means of alleviating guilt arising from repressed hostility.

Among the Tallensi relations between fathers and sons are affectionate, but, because a son cannot attain full jural authority until his father's death, sons bear a latent resentment of their fathers. However, this resentment does not manifest itself as belief in the malevolence of the dead. Instead, the Tallensi believe that the authority of the father is granted to him by his ancestors, who demand from the son continued subordination. Thus the function of ancestor worship is to reinforce the general, positive valuation of the authority of elders, quite apart from the individual personality of any specific ancestor. A related function is to place a positive value upon subordination of the desires of the individual to the collective authority of tribal elders. This value is useful in ensuring the continued solidarity of the group.

In *Death, Property, and the Ancestors* (1966), Jack Goody studied ancestor worship among the LoDagaa of

West Africa. Property to be inherited by descendants is not distributed until the death of the father. Prevented from commanding the full possession of this property, a son experiences a subconscious wish for the father's death. Repression of this guilt takes the form of the belief that the dead have eternal rights to the property they formerly held. In order to enjoy those rights, the dead must receive sacrifices from the living. If sacrifices are not forthcoming, the ancestors will afflict their descendants with sickness and misfortune. Thus beliefs concerning ancestral affliction are inextricably linked to social issues of inheritance and succession.

In "Gods, Ghosts, and Ancestors," Arthur Wolf (1974) shows how Chinese concepts of a variety of supernatural beings closely correspond to social reality. In particular, the conception of ancestors replicates perceptions of parents, elders, and other kin. This is not to say that the living and dead are not distinguished, but that the same relations of authority and obedience are found among the living and in their rites for their ancestors.

Ancestor Worship in Practice. This section describes the practice of ancestor worship in various cultural areas and in relation to several religious traditions.

Africa. Ancestor worship normally forms only one aspect of an African people's religion. A person without descendants cannot become an ancestor, and in order to achieve ancestorhood, proper burial, with rites appropriate to the person's status, is necessary. After an interval following death, a deceased person who becomes an ancestor is no longer perceived as an individual. Personal characteristics disappear from the awareness of the living, and only the value of the ancestor as a moral exemplar remains. Ancestors are believed to be capable of intervening in human affairs, but only in the defined area of their authority, that is, among their descendants.

In an important study of African ancestor worship, Max Gluckman (1937) established the distinction between ancestor worship and the cult of the dead. Ancestors represent positive moral forces who can cause or prevent misfortune and who require that their descendants observe a moral code. The cult of the dead, on the other hand, is not exclusively directed to deceased kinsmen, but to the spirits of the dead in general. Here spirits are prayed to for the achievement of amoral or antisocial ends, whereas ancestors can be petitioned only for ends that are in accord with basic social principles.

Among the Edo the deceased is believed to progress through the spirit world on a course that parallels the progress of his son and other successors. Events in this world are punctuated by rites and are believed to have a counterpart in the spirit world. Thus it may be twenty

years before a spirit is finally merged into the collective dead and descendants can receive their full complement of authority. In this sense the ancestors continue to exert authority over their descendants long after death. Until that authority ceases, the son must perform rites as prescribed and behave in approved ways.

Among the Ewe of Ghana, ancestor worship is an important focal point of the whole society. It is the basis of the entire religious system and a point of reference for the conceptualization of all social relations. The Ewe believe that the human being has two souls. Before birth the being resides in the spirit world; it comes into this world when it finds a mother, and it returns to the spirit world at death. This cycle of movement through the realms is perpetual. The ancestors are invoked with libations on all ceremonial occasions. Rites range from simple, personal libations to complicated rituals involving an entire lineage. During a ritual, the soul of the ancestor returns to be fed through the ceremonial stool that serves as its shrine. In addition to individual stools, there is a lineage stool for lineage ancestors that is kept wrapped in silks or velvet.

The studies of Igor Kopytoff (1971) on the Suku of Zaire raise the question of the appropriateness of the term *ancestor worship*. The Suku have no term that can be translated as "ancestor"; they make no terminological distinction between the dead and the living. A single set of principles regulates relations between seniors and juniors. The dividing line between living and dead does not affect those principles. Thus we can say that among the Suku ancestor worship is an extension of lineage relations between elders and their juniors. Furthermore, lineages must be considered as communities of both living and dead. The powers attributed to ancestors can only be seen as a projection of the powers of living elders. In this sense the term "ancestor worship" can be misleading.

Melanesia. Ancestors are one of many types of spirits recognized by Melanesian tribal peoples. Regarding the role of ancestor worship in tribal life, Roy Rappaport's study *Pigs for the Ancestors* (1977) presents an innovative approach not seen in the study of ancestor worship in other areas. Among the highland Tsembaga, ancestral ritual is part of a complex ecological system in which a balanced cycle of abundance and scarcity is regulated. Yam gardens are threatened by the unhindered growth of the pig population, and human beings must supplement their starch-based diet with protein. Propelling this cycle is a belief that pigs must be sacrificed to the ancestors in great numbers. These sacrifices provide the Tsembaga with protein in great quantity. Pigs sacrificed when someone dies or in connection with

intertribal warfare supplement the ordinary diet of yams, which is adequate for ordinary activity but not for periods of stress. Thus ancestor worship plays a vital role in the ecological balance of the tribe in its environment.

India. Ancestor worship in India takes a variety of forms, depending upon the area and the ethnic group concerned; however, providing food for the dead is a basic and widespread practice. Orthodox Hindu practice centers on an annual rite between August and September that includes offering sacred rice balls (*piṇḍa*) to the ancestors. The *Laws of Manu* includes specific instructions for ancestral offerings. Descendants provide a feast for the brahmans, and the merit of this act is transferred to the ancestors. The feast itself is called the Śrāddha. The form of this rite varies depending on whether it is observed during a funeral or in subsequent, annual observances. Texts prescribe ritual purifications and preparations in detail.

Buddhism. Based on a canonical story, the All Souls Festival, or Avalambana, is observed throughout Southeast and East Asia. The story concerns one of the Buddha's disciples, Maudgalyāyana, known for skill in meditation and supranormal powers. The mother of Maudgalyāyana appeared to her son in a dream and revealed to him that she was suffering innumerable tortures in the blackest hell because of her *karman*. Through magic Maudgalyāyana visited his mother in hell, but his power was of no avail in securing her release. Eventually the Buddha instructed him to convene an assembly of the priesthood which then would recite *sūtra*s and transfer the merit of those rites to ancestors. In other words, descendants must utilize the mediation of the priesthood in order to benefit ancestors. The result is an annual festival, traditionally observed on the day of the full moon of the eighth lunar month. At this festival special *sūtra* recitations and offering rites for the ancestors are held in Buddhist temples, and domestic rites differing in each country are performed. In addition to rites for ancestors, observances for the "hungry ghosts" and for spirits who have died leaving no descendants are performed.

Although one of the key concepts in early Indian Buddhism was the idea of no-soul (*anātman*), in fact the idea of a soul is widely accepted in East Asia. The idea of rebirth in human, heavenly, and subhuman forms is found combined with the idea that an eternal soul rests in an ancestral tablet or inhabits a world of the dead. The contradictions involved in this complex of ideas are not generally addressed as problematic by those who hold them.

In East Asia today the performance of ancestral and funeral ritual provides the Buddhist clergy with one of its greatest sources of revenue, a tendency particularly marked in Japan. The Buddhist clergy is typically employed to recite *sūtra*s for the dead and to enshrine ancestral tablets in temples.

Shamanism. Throughout East Asia ancestor worship is found in close association with shamanistic practices. Shamanism in East Asia today consists in large part of mediumistic communications in which the shaman enters a trance and divines the present condition of a client's ancestors. These practices are based on the folk notion that if a person suffers from an unusual or seemingly unwarranted affliction, the ancestors may be the cause. If the ancestors are suffering, if they are displeased with their descendants' conduct, or if they are offered inappropriate or insufficient ritual, they may cause some harm to come to their descendants. However, it is only rarely that this belief is straightforwardly expressed as the proposition that ancestors willfully, malevolently afflict their descendants.

Chinese ancestor worship. An important component at work in the metaphysics of Chinese ancestor cults is indigenous theories of the soul. [*See* Soul, *article on* Chinese Concepts.*] First of all, since Chou times (c. 1123–221 BCE) the idea of the soul as the pale, ghostly shadow of a man has been a perduring notion found in popular stories. These apparitions are called *kuei*, meaning demons, devils, and ghosts, as opposed to *shen*, the benevolent spirits of ancestors (a word used also to refer to all deities).

Together with this idea of the ghostly soul there developed a conception of the soul in terms of *yin* and *yang*. According to this theory, the *yin* portion of the soul, called *p'o*, may turn into a *kuei* and cause misfortune if descendants do not perform proper ancestral rites. If the *p'o* is satisfactorily placated, however, it will rest peacefully. Meanwhile, the *yang* portion of the soul, called *hun*, associated with *shen*, will bless and protect descendants and their families. [*See* Afterlife, *article on* Chinese Concepts.*] Thus Chinese ancestral rites have been motivated simultaneously by the fear of the vengeful dead and by the hope for ancestral blessings.

Chinese ancestor worship can be seen as two separate cults: one that expresses the unity of a lineage of lineage-segment, the so-called hall cult, and another directed to the recently deceased members of a household, the domestic cult. Lineage observances center upon an ancestral hall in which tablets representing lineage ancestors are enshrined and worshiped by descendants in a Confucian mode. Domestic rites center upon daily offerings at a home altar. [*See* Domestic Observances, *article on* Chinese Practices.*] Lineage ritual tends to formality and the expression of sentiments of obedience to the authority of ancestors and elders as a group,

whereas domestic ritual focuses upon the expression of individual sentiments and continued relations between descendants and particular deceased individuals.

Chinese ancestor worship is closely linked to property inheritance; every deceased individual must receive offerings from at least one descendant who will provide him with sustenance in the next life. However, a specific person is only required to worship those ancestors from whom he has received property.

Confucianism. Confucianism lays heavy emphasis upon the correct practice of ancestral ritual. Special attention is given to minute details concerning the content and arrangement of offerings, proper dress, gesture and posture, and the order of precedence in appearing before ancestral altars. According to the *Book of Family Ritual* of the Neo-Confucian scholar Chu Hsi, the *Chu-tzu chia-li*, commemoration of ancestors became primarily a responsibility of eldest sons, and women were excluded from officiating roles in the celebration of rites.

The highest virtue in Confucian doctrine is filial piety, quintessentially expressed in the worship of ancestors. When Buddhism was first introduced to China, one of Confucianism's strongest arguments against it was the assertion that Buddhism was in essence opposed to filial piety and was likely to disrupt the practice of ancestor worship. If sons took the tonsure and failed to perform ancestral rites, then not only would spirits in the other world suffer from lack of ritual attention but social relations in society would also be undermined.

In traditional Chinese society gravesites are located through a geomancer. Based upon the idea that an ideal confluence of "winds and waters" *(feng-shui)* benefits the dead and their descendants, a geomancer seeks a site in which the burial urn can be nestled in the curve of rolling hills and near running water. This combination of cosmic forces is believed to benefit the dead and to facilitate their progress in the other world. Lineages compete fiercely with one another for these scarce resources and may even forcibly remove unprotected urns so that new ones may occupy auspicious sites.

Korea. In Korea women and men hold quite different images of ancestors. A woman marries away from her natal village and enters her husband's household under the authority of his mother and father. The wife's relations with her husband's kin are expected to be characterized by strife and competition. Her membership in the husband's lineage is tenuous and is never fully acknowledged in ritual until her death. Because women's relation to the lineage is strained in these ways, they hold more negative views of the ancestors than do men. Women's negative conceptions are expressed in the idea that ancestors maliciously harm their descendants by

afflicting them with disease and misfortune. Men worship ancestors in Confucian rites from which women are excluded, while women perform rites for ancestors in a shamanic mode, utilizing widespread networks of shamans, most of whom are women. This gender-based bifurcation in ancestor worship is a special characteristic of Korean tradition.

Japan. Since the Tokugawa period (1600–1868) Japanese ancestor worship has mainly been carried out in a Buddhist mode, though Shintō rites also exist. As in China, ancestral ritual reflects relations of authority and inheritance, but instead of lineage rites, rites are performed by main and branch households of the traditional family system, the *ie*. Branch families *(bunke)* accept the ritual centrality of the main household *(honke)* by participating in its rites in a subordinate status. The *honke* does not reciprocate. In addition to *honke-bunke* rites, domestic rites performed before a Buddhist altar are a prominent feature of Japanese ancestral worship.

In *Ancestor Worship in Contemporary Japan* (1973) Robert Smith demonstrates that sympathy often provokes the Japanese to enshrine the tablets of entirely unrelated persons in their own domestic altars. They may also keep duplicate tablets out of personal attachment to a deceased person and with no feeling that sanctions will be forthcoming if they fail to do so. Thus, in addition to its reflection of kinship relations, ancestor worship becomes a means of expressing affection.

The "new religions" of Japan are a group of several hundred associations that have appeared in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Whether their doctrine is derived from Shintō or Buddhism, most reserve a special place for ancestor worship in some form. Reiyūkai Kyōdan (Association of Friends of the Spirits) represents a rare example of a religious group in which worship of ancestors is the main focus of individual and collective rites. Reverence for ancestors in the new religions and in Japanese society in general is closely linked to social and political conservatism and to a traditionalist preference for the social mores of the past.

[*See also* Genealogy *and* Family.]

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Mythic Ancestors

Cosmogonic myths are narratives that depict the creation of the world by divine beings. In many cosmogonic myths a supreme being or high god creates the world, after which other divine beings come into being, who in the form of culture heroes or other types of gods reveal the realm of the sacred, death, sexuality, sacred geography, and the methods of food production. The narrative of the cosmogonic myth moves from the initial creation of the world to the revelation of the archetypal actions and gestures of divine beings and culture heroes, thus describing a sacred history of primordial times. [See Archetypes.] These divine beings and culture heroes form the ancestral lineages of the human race. The situation of the human race is based upon the activities, adventures, discoveries, and disappearance of these first creative ancestors, who appeared in sacred history. [See Cosmogony.]

Primordial Ruptures. In the Mesopotamian myth *Enuma elish*, a tension develops between the first creators and their offspring. This tension leads to a rupture in the initial creation and a struggle between its gods and their offspring. In the ensuing battle, the foundation is established for human existence. In the *Enuma elish*, the god Marduk is the leader of the offspring who fight Tiamat, the mother. In the battle Tiamat is slain, and her body becomes the earth on which human beings live. Certain archetypes for human existence are established as a result of this battle: the cooperation between the offspring gods becomes a model for cooperative enterprise among human beings, which the death of Tiamat affirms. In the biblical myth of the *Book of Genesis*, Adam and Eve live in Paradise with the creator god. When they sin they become the archetypal ancestors of the human community, for they now must experience sexuality, birth, labor, and death, the universal lot of all human beings. [See Fall, The.]

A Dogon myth from West Africa describes a similar situation. The god Amma began creation by first forming a cosmic egg, in which the embryos of twin deities matured; they were to become perfect beings. One of the twins became impatient and decided to leave the egg before maturation. In so doing it tore out part of the placenta and fell to what is now the earth, creating a place of habitation from the torn placenta of the egg. This was an incomplete creation, however, and Amma, to rectify the situation, sacrificed the other twin. Even with this sacrifice, the creation could not be made perfect. Instead of creating perfect beings who were both androgynous and amphibious, Amma was forced to compromise. Thus, humans are not androgynous but rather composed of two sexes; they are not amphibious but essentially terrestrial; they do not live continuously in a perfect state of illumination (composed of equal parts of dark and light), as was the original intention of Amma, but in two alternating modes of full light and darkness. In addition to this, the opposing natures of the obedient and the malevolent twin, who are the ancestors of all human beings on earth, define modes of life throughout the universe.

In myths of this kind we are able to recognize what Mircea Eliade (1969) identified as two forms of primordiality. There is, first of all, the primordiality defined by the great creator deities who brought the world into being. Their creativity is inaccessible to ordinary human beings and they appear remote and unconcerned with the human condition. [See Deus Otiosus.] There is another primordiality that can be recognized in the tension and rupture between the creator deities and other

deities who enter upon adventures and exploits that define the archetypal modes for human existence. Through these activities, the creator deities bring the sacred into the existential modes of human existence and are seen as the ancestors of human beings.

In some cultures, the cosmogonic myths make no reference to great creator deities. The narrative begins with the second primordiality and the action is that of the culture hero, whose actions create the human condition. Among the Kwakiutl Indians of North America, the culture hero is Transformer and comes upon the scene as a human being living in a human family. Whenever he discovers human deceit or error, he transforms the human being into a bird or other animal, thus filling the landscape with the food supply necessary for human existence. In this manner Transformer sets the rules for the production and consumption of food and for reincarnation (to ensure a continuous supply of food). Prior to the actions of Transformer there is no order in the cosmos. After his participation in the production of the food supply, all other forms of order—within the family, society, and so on—come into being. The chiefs of the segmented social units *(numaym)* are each related to an animal ancestor. In fact, following upon the transformation of humans into animals, the Kwakiutl believe that animals and spirits lead lives that are exactly equivalent to those of human beings. Animals are considered to be human beings who are wearing masks and costumes created by their animal forms. [*See* Culture Heroes *and* Animals.]

The second primordiality also dominates the myth of what Adolf E. Jensen (1963) has called "cultivator cultures." In a myth cited from the Indonesian island of Ceram, he describes a type of deity referred to by the indigenous peoples as a *dema* deity. The activity of these deities goes back to the end of the first primordial period. They sometimes possess human form and at other times animal form. The decisive event in their lives is the killing of one *dema* deity by another, which establishes the human condition. Before the death of the *dema*, the human condition is not characterized by sexual differentiation or death; it is only after the death of the *dema* that these aspects come into existence. The *dema* come at the end of primordial time and are thus the first of all human ancestors. Through the death of the *dema*, human beings are accepted again within their community. In myths of this kind the ancestors are gods, heroes, or divine beings, who through their actions make possible and render meaningful the human condition as it is, with all of its possibilities and limitations, and it is through them that the human condition possesses a divine presence.

Ancestors not only set forth the general and universal human condition; they are also the founders of clans, families, moieties, and other segments of the human community. N. D. Fustel de Coulanges's classic work *The Ancient City* (1901) describes how ancient Greek and Roman families were founded by ancestors who were heroes or divine beings. The family cult was at once the basis for the order and maintenance of the family and a cult of the ancestor. Similar notions are present among Australian Aborigines, where each totemic group has its own totemic ancestor who controls the food supply and is the basis for authority and marriages among the groups. [*See* Totemism.] In almost the same manner, the Tucano Indians of Colombia understand their origins as arising from mythical ancestors, the Desána, who revealed all the forms of nature and modes of being to the human community.

An exemplary expression of the cult of ancestors is found in Chinese religions. It is the duty of Chinese sons to provide for and revere their parents in this life and the life after death; this is a relationship of reciprocity. The household is composed of the living and the dead; the ancestors provide and sustain the foundations of spiritual order upon which the family is based, while the living keep the family in motion. The living are always under the tacit judgment of their ancestors, on account of which they attempt to conduct their lives in an honorable manner.

The Founding of Cities. Not only do divine ancestors and culture heroes form the lineages of families and totemic groups, they are equally present at the beginnings of almost every city foundation in ancient and traditional cultures. Cain in the biblical story is the culture hero who founds the city of Enoch; Romulus is the founder of Rome; Quetzalcoatl, of Tollan. In Southeast Asia, the founding of states and kingship follow the archetypes of the Hindu god Indra.

The founding of a city may be a response to the experience of a hierophany. Hierophanies of space, or ceremonial centers, are revelations of the sacred meaning of space itself. [*See* Center of the World.] The divine beings or culture heroes who found cities derive their power from such sacred ceremonial centers. In some cases, a sacrifice is necessary to appease the gods of the location; thus, many of the myths involving the founding of cities relate a story of twins, one of whom is killed or sacrificed, as in the case of Cain's slaying of Abel, or Romulus's murder of Remus. In one of the mythological cycles of Quetzalcoatl, for example, a magical combat takes place in which Quetzalcoatl kills his uncle.

The ancestors as founders of a city establish the archetypes for all domesticated space. The normalization of activities in the space of the city, whether in terms of

family structures or the public meanings of space, are guaranteed by the founding ancestor. All other establishments or reestablishments of cities will follow the model of the archetypal gestures of the founding ancestor of the city. The ruler of the city represents and symbolizes the presence of the divine ancestor, and elaborate rituals of rulership take place at certain temporal intervals to commemorate and reestablish the founding gestures. [*See* Cities.]

Death. In some myths death enters the world because of an action, inaction, or quarrel among the creator deities. They may have simply forgotten to tell human beings whether they were immortal or not, or the creator deity allows death to enter the world. In a myth from Madagascar two gods create human beings: the earth god forms them from wood and clay, the god of heaven gives them life. Human beings die so that they may return to the origins of their being.

In most mythic scenarios, however, death is the result of a sacred history that introduces the second meaning of primordiality. Through ignorance, interdiction, or violence, a break is made by the divine offspring from the creator deity, and in this rupture is the origin of death. The origin of the abode of the dead is equally located in this event, for, in the mythic scenarios, the rupture creates divisions in space among which a place of the dead comes into being. For example, in the Dogon myth mentioned above, the placenta of the god Amma is the earth, and at death one returns to the earth which was the original stuff of creation.

Funerary rituals are very important, for they assure that the dead will arrive in the correct manner at the abode of the ancestors. The souls of the dead must be instructed and led on the right path lest they become lost. At death the deceased is vulnerable and subject to the attack of malevolent spirits. Funerary rituals prescribe the correct behavior and route to be taken by the dead to the land of the ancestors.

[*For further discussion, see* Death *and* Funeral Rites.]

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CHARLES H. LONG

ANCHOR. While the anchor has had some currency in various cultures as a symbol relating to the sea and to virtues like constancy and hope, its religious significance became paramount only with the growth of Christianity. In fact, the anchor as we know it and as the object early Christians turned into a symbol did not appear until well into Roman times; the Greeks used an anchor that was essentially an arrangement of sandbags.

Both the appearance and the function of the anchor played a role in its development as a religious symbol. Early Christians saw in it an allegorical and disguised form of the cross. Its function became metaphorical in the New Testament in *Hebrews* 6:19: "We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf."

Signifying steadfastness and hope, the anchor became one of the commonest symbols in the catacombs and on early Christian jewelry and seal stones. It was also associated with other symbols, as, for example, in the anchor cross, which combined the two shapes to make one that showed the Christian's hope firmly joined to Christ.

The anchor also appeared with the letters alpha and omega to represent eternal hope, and with the fish to

signify, again, hope in Christ. In combination with the dolphin, the anchor came to mean the Christian soul or the church guided by Christ. The speedy dolphin was represented with the anchor to illustrate Augustine's motto "Festina lente" ("Make haste slowly").

Another early, if odd, use of the symbol was to identify Clement of Rome, a church father and one of the earliest bishops of Rome. Legend relates that Clement's persecutors tied an anchor around his neck and tossed him into the sea. The prayers of his followers made the waters withdraw, revealing a small temple where his body was found. Clement was frequently portrayed with an anchor around his neck or beside him.

The anchor was popular as a symbol until the medieval period, at which time it largely disappeared. When it reappeared it was, for example, as a symbol of Nicholas of Myra, because of his patronage of sailors, and as the attribute of hope, one of the seven virtues in Renaissance art.

Other, more exotic, ideas grew up around the symbol in some forms of magic and mysticism. Evelyn Jobes (1961) describes the bottom of the anchor as a crescent moon (ark, boat, nave, vulva, yoni, or female principle), in which is placed the mast (lingam, phallus, or male principle), around which the serpent (fertility, life) entwines itself. With the crossbeam, the parts add up to the mystic number four, and the anchor thus also symbolizes the four quarters of the universe, as well as both the sun and the world's center. The entire symbol expresses the idea of androgyny and of the union that results in new life. Finally, Ad de Vries (1978) ascribes to Freud the concept of the anchor as a combination of the cross (the body of Christ rising) and the crescent (Mary), the whole representing life.

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ELAINE MAGALIS

ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN RELIGIONS. *See* Aramean Religion; Canaanite Religion; Egyptian Religion; Hittite Religion; Israelite Religion; Mesopotamian Religions; Moabite Religion; Philistine Religion; *and* Phoenician Religion.

ANDRAE, TOR (1885–1946), historian of religions and bishop of the Swedish church. Tor J. E. Andrae was born on 9 July 1885 into a Protestant minister's family in Hevna. After finishing school in Linköping, he began to study humanities at Uppsala in 1903 and eventually became proficient in Hebrew as well as Arabic. His degree in humanities completed, he turned to theology, obtained his candidacy in 1909, and was, like each of his three older brothers, consecrated a minister of the church. During his theological studies, Andrae was deeply influenced by Nathan Söderblom, who suggested that he study the Prophet of Islam and who was instrumental in shaping his scholarly career. Andrae, interested in religious psychology, turned to the problem of Muḥammad's response to the divine call that made him a prophet; in his first steps into Arabic literature, he was guided by Ignácz Goldziher. The young theologian, who served the church first in Delsbo and then in Gamla Uppsala, was enabled to spend some time in 1915 in Berlin reading Arabic manuscripts. The result of his intense studies was his book *Die person Muhammeds in lehre und glauben seiner gemeinde* (Stockholm, 1918). For the first time, the development of the veneration of Muḥammad in Muslim piety and mystical theory was shown with convincing clarity. Andrae's mastery of the sources is evident, and the book remains to this day the best, and virtually unique, contribution to the important problem of how and why Muḥammad grew from "a servant to whom revelation came" into the Perfect Man and axis of the universe.

Andrae was awarded the Th.D. in 1921, and his writings and sermons of the early twenties show his deep concern for the Swedish church, which seemed to him to embody the Christian ideal of a religious community. He always emphasized that Christianity is the most perfect religion, a conclusion that, he admitted, cannot be proved by scientific methods but is to be experienced as a result of one's personal search for truth.

In the fall of 1923, Andrae was invited to lecture on the history of religions at the University of Stockholm. His lectures about the psychology of mystical experience, which presented a broad survey of unusual experiences on all levels of religion, were published as *Mystikens psykologi* in 1926. In the same year appeared *Der Ursprung des Islams und das Christentum*, a study that takes up one of Andrae's favorite themes, the strong influence of Syrian Christianity on the formation of early Islam. This influence, he pointed out, is also palpable in early Islamic pietistic trends ("Zuhd und Mönchtum," *Le monde oriental*, 1931). In his inaugural lecture as professor in Stockholm in 1927, Andrae dealt with the history of religions and the crisis of religions, discussing

the extent to which the difference between the believer and the nonbeliever exists throughout history, an issue that led him later to write on the "problem of religious propensity" (*Die Frage der religiösen Anlage*, Uppsala, 1932). In his lectures Andrae rejected the purely evolutionist trend in the history of religions and stressed the fact that primitive religions as we know them now are not to be confused with the original religions.

In 1929 Andrae became professor of religious studies in Uppsala, and during the following years some of his best-known books were published. Chief among these was *Muḥammed: Hans liv och hans tro* (Muḥammad: The Man and His Faith; Stockholm, 1930). This book, which has been translated into several languages, was highly admired for its sensitive psychological approach to the Prophet of Islam, and it is still a standard work. In 1931 the death of Archbishop Söderblom, Andrae's master and friend, caused him to write a fine, deeply felt biography of Söderblom (Uppsala, 1931).

The following year Andrae was elected into the Swedish Academy and, as inspector of the Olaus-Petri-Stiftelse, had the opportunity of inviting leading historians of religion to Uppsala in the following years. His monograph on the Swedish theologian and polyhistor Georg Wallin (d. 1760) shows him as a historian of high rank. For a brief period in 1936 Andrae served as minister of ecclesiastic affairs in the Swedish government and was elected bishop in his home province, Linköping, where he spent the last nine years of his life. He died in January 1946 after expressing his firm faith in God and in eternal life in his last, broadcast sermon on New Year's Eve 1946.

For all his deep-rooted love for the Swedish church and his Christian faith, Andrae was able to appreciate foreign religions as well. He was particularly interested in showing that Islam, so often maligned as a purely legalist religion of military uniformity, knows the secret of divine grace very well, because God has revealed himself in Islam as in all other religions (a Söderblomian idea). Andrae's booklet *I myrtenträdgården* (In the Garden of Myrtles) was published posthumously in 1947; it sketches the early development of the Ṣūfī movement with insight and love. Fascinating are Andrae's studies *Det osynligas värld* (Uppsala, 1934), in which he deals with the problem of immortality and eternal life and holds that, if eternal life is real life, it cannot be static but must imply a continuing development of the spirit—ideas known from Lotze and Eucken and expressed in 1928 by Muhammad Iqbal, the Indo-Muslim philosopher. Andrae's conviction of an unending life after death was a result of the dynamism of his own religion, a dynamism that led him also to dislike all forms of gnostic religions, which, he felt, were too intellectualistic.

Andrae's books are fruits of a deep study of the sources, combined with a fine understanding of the psychological roots of religious experience, coupled with respect for the religious personality. Besides, they are stylistically perfect. His contributions to the study of Islam, particularly to a better understanding of the spiritual role of the Prophet in the Muslim community, and his intense work for the Swedish church are the two most outstanding facets of his life and work.

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ANNEMARIE SCHIMMEL

ANDROCENTRISM refers to cultural perspectives where the male is generically taken to be the norm of humanness. Androcentrism originates from a male monopoly on cultural leadership and the shaping and transmission of culture. In religion this means that males monopolize priestly and teaching roles of religion and exclude women both from the exercise of these roles and from the education that such roles require. Thus women are prevented from bringing their own experience and point of view to the shaping of the official public culture of religion, however much they may participate in the religion as consumers of the public cult or in auxiliary cults restricted to women. The official public definition of the religion in terms of law, cult, and symbol is defined both without female participation and in such a way as to justify their exclusion.

Women's exclusion from the learning and shaping of the cult and symbol system also means that they do not participate in the processes by which a religion remembers and transmits its traditions. As a result, religions or religious practices that do not exclude women are forgotten or are remembered in a way that makes this participation appear deviant. Androcentric religious culture makes woman the "other"; woman's silence and

absence are normative. Consequently, her presence is remarked upon only to reinforce her otherness, either by definitions of "woman's place" or by remonstrances against women who are deemed to have "gotten out of their place."

Androcentric culture also translates the dialectics of human existence—superiority/inferiority, right/left, light/darkness, active/passive, life/death, reason/feeling, and so forth—into androcentric gender symbolism. In this gender symbolism the female is always the "other": inferior in relation to superior, weaker in relation to stronger, negative in relation to positive. Even when the qualities assigned to women are positive, such as love or altruism, these are defined in such a way as to be supplemental or auxiliary to a male-centered definition of the self. The female becomes the unconscious that completes the conscious, the affectivity that completes rationality. Thus, despite the appearance of balance in such gender complementarity, the female is always relative and complementary to the male, rather than herself the one who is complemented or completed in her own right.

Androcentrism must be seen as a pervasive influence on all religious cultures, having shaped either those religious cultures themselves or the way they have developed or the way they have been reported upon and studied, or in many cases all three. The fact that this influence has remained largely unnoticed is itself an expression of its pervasiveness. It has been so pervasive and normative that it itself has not even been noticeable, since one cannot notice a given point of view unless another point of view is also possible.

Androcentrism pervades all aspects of the religious culture—its view of human nature, its definitions of good and evil, its creation stories, its images of the divine, its laws, rituals, polity, and practices of worship. One could illustrate this from many religions, but in this essay the illustrations will be drawn from the Judeo-Christian tradition. In this tradition, although the two creation stories in the *Book of Genesis*, chapters 1 and 2, offer alternative possibilities, religious anthropology has in fact been drawn from the second. Here the male is the norm, the one created first; woman is created second and taken by God from man's rib. This is a very peculiar story, since it reverses the actual experience of human birth, in which both males and females are born from the female. By making a male God the midwife of the birth of the female from the side of the male, it defines woman's place as auxiliary and secondary to the male. So normative is this assumption that few Christians even notice the oddness of the story, its reversal of actual human birth.

This place of woman as secondary and auxiliary to the male has been evident in all classical Christian anthropology. Christian anthropology operates within a dualistic framework that sets the good human self, created in the "image of God," in tension with an evil self that has lost or diminished its originally good human nature and positive relation to God. Although the *Genesis* 1 story defines both male and female equally as possessing the image of God, all classical Christian anthropology has regarded the male as the normative image of God in such a way as to make woman the image of either the lower or the fallen part of the self. While it is never denied that women possess some relationship to the image of God, they are seen as related to that image only under and through their relationship to the male, rather than in their own right. In themselves, women are said to image the body that is to be ruled over by the mind, or else the sin-prone part of the self that causes sin and the Fall.

This androcentric definition of humanity is evident in Augustine's treatise on the Trinity (*De Trinitate* 7.7.10):

> How then did the apostle tell us that man is the image of God and therefore he is forbidden to cover his head, but that the woman is not so and therefore she is commanded to cover hers? Unless forsooth according to that which I have said already when I was treating of the nature of the human mind, that the woman, together with her own husband, is the image of God, so that the whole substance may be one image, but when she is referred to separately in her quality as a helpmeet, which regards the woman alone, then she is not the image of God, but as regards the male alone, he is the image of God as fully and completely as when the woman too is joined to him in one.

Deeply embedded in this Christian definition of female subordinate and auxiliary existence is the story of female primacy in sin. Although the story of Eve's role in the expulsion from Paradise is by no means a normative story for the Old Testament or even for the Christian Gospels, through the Pauline tradition it assumed normative status for defining the human predicament in such a way that not only all Christian theology but the Bible itself is read with this presupposition. Female primacy in sin is the underside of woman's subordination in the divinely ordained nature of things: things got out of hand for humanity and its relationship to God in the beginning because woman got out of hand. Woman acting on her own initiative caused sin to come into the world and Adam to be expelled from Paradise. He is punished by the alienation of his work, but she is punished by the alienation of her humanity. She must now bring forth children in sorrow and be under the subjugation of her husband.

This story operates to justify female subordination in society and religion. This status of subordination had now been redoubled and reinforced as divine punishment for an original sin of acting on her own. Any efforts of women to act on their own, rather than as auxiliaries in a male-defined social order, can then be seen as new evidence of sinful female propensities—propensities that are to be repressed by reference to this original sin that caused everything to go awry. Woman acting on her own initiative can only do evil and cause chaos. She can never do good by herself, but only when she restricts herself to obedient response to male commands.

The androcentric presuppositions of the Christian view of creation and sin are maintained also in the definitions of salvation. The redeemer, the Messiah, the manifestation of God in the flesh, appears in male form. This maleness of the Christian redeemer could be regarded as a historical or cultural accident, similar to the fact that he is Jewish and appears in a particular time and place. These particularities in no way limit his ability to represent universal humanity. Yet Christian theology has in fact typically treated Jesus' maleness differently from his Jewishness, so as to make that maleness ontologically necessary to his ability to represent God. For Thomas Aquinas, the maleness of Jesus flows directly from the fact that the male is the normative or "perfect" expression of the human species, while woman is non-normative and defective. Thus to represent the fullness of human nature, it is necessary that Jesus be male. Here we see clearly the androcentric presupposition whereby the male possesses a generic humanity that is both complete in itself and capable of encompassing the representation of woman as well, while the woman cannot even represent herself, much less the male, as a human being.

This androcentric definition of Christology or the necessary maleness of the incarnation points in two directions. On the one side, it reveals the presumed maleness of God. On the other side, it excludes women from the priesthood and from representation of Christ's and God's divine authority in church leadership. Although Christian theology does not claim that God is in a literal sense male, there is an overwhelming bias in Christian theology, itself derived from its parent religion Judaism, to image God in male form. Male roles are seen as representing authority and rule, initiation and power. Since God is by definition the absolute expression of these roles of initiation, power, and sovereignty, only male metaphors are apppropriate for him. Female metaphors can be used only for what is ruled over, created by, or acted upon by God; they cannot signify what acts, rules, or has autonomous power.

This gender dualism of God and creation as male and female is evident in biblical as well as Christian symbolism. Although female theological metaphors are not absent from the Bible and Christian cult and theology, these primarily either symbolize creaturely subordination to God or else point to evil or negative traits that separate the human from God. Christian symbolism of the female thus splits into two forms, the good feminine and the bad female. The good feminine represents creaturely existence totally submissive to divine initiative, self-abnegating of any pride or activity of its own. Typically, this is also expressed as "purity" or suppression of sexuality. The Virgin Mary represents the apogee of this ideal. The feminine is also used in both Judaism and Christianity to image the elect people in relationship to God. The covenant relationship to God is imaged along the lines of a patriarchal marriage, with Israel or the church as bride in relation to the bridegroom.

Influenced by ascetic spirituality, Christianity emphasizes the virginal character of the church not only in her espousal to her Lord, but also in her birthing of the people of God. Christian baptism is imaged as a new birth that transforms and negates the sinfulness of birth through the female. Actual birth destroys virginity and brings forth sinful offspring, while through baptism the church remains virginal and brings forth virginal offspring. This baptism symbolism illustrates another typical trait of androcentric patriarchal religion: the extent to which its symbols and rituals duplicate female biological and social roles—conception, birth, suckling, feeding—but in such a way as to negate these roles in their female form, while elevating them to a higher spiritual plane through the male cultic monopoly on these activities.

Female symbolism in Christianity also symbolizes the soul and its passive reception of divine initiative, as well as creation itself or the earth as the object of God's creative work. In *Proverbs* and the wisdom tradition feminine roles are in the same way ascribed to God. This continues in Judaism in concepts such as the divine Shekhinah, or divine presence. Some minority traditions in Christianity have also imaged the Holy Spirit as female or revived the wisdom tradition to speak of God as having a feminine side. But in all versions of this notion of divine androgyny, the feminine roles or aspects of God are thought of as secondary and auxiliary to a male-centered divine fatherhood. Wisdom is seen as a secondary and dependent principle that comes forth from the divine father to mediate his laws and actions to creation. Thus she is often pictured as resembling the family mother who mediates the commands of the father to the children. Thus even these minor in-

stances of feminine imagery for God do not fundamentally break out of the androcentric patriarchal symbolism that allows the "good feminine" to image only that which is secondary and auxiliary to a male-centered ultimacy.

Female participation in Christian redemption has also been biased by androcentric anthropology. In the ascetic traditions of Christian spirituality, the holy woman is defined as transcending not only her bodily temptations but also her female nature: she is said to have become "virile" and "manly." This peculiar formulation is found in gnosticism (see logion 114 of the *Gospel of Thomas*), but also in orthodox Christian asceticism (see Leander of Seville's preface to his *Institutes on Virginity*). It derives from an assumed analogy between maleness and spirituality (or rationality), and between femaleness and corporeality or the passions. Asceticism restores the male in his spiritual manliness, but is possible for woman only by transcending her "female weakness." This notion suggested to many early Christian women that asceticism might be the route to female emancipation. But the church tradition, as defined by male leadership, hastened to add that the true spirituality of woman is expressed only through the most total submission to male authority, especially ecclesiastical authority.

In the Protestant tradition, where spirituality is reincorporated into a familial context, woman's piety is seen as expressible only through submission to her husband, as well as to church and civil authority (as long as these public authorities are of the correct Christian sect). Thus, Christian redemption does not set woman free, but rather forgives her for her original sin of insubordination by displaying her as voluntarily submissive to male authority.

Nevertheless, Christian androcentrism remains deeply suspicious that all women, even holy women, conceal tendencies to insubordination. When these tendencies come out in the open and are asserted unrepentantly, woman becomes witch or handmaid of the devil. When she is crushed or suppressed, as she should be, woman—even if holy—remains Eve, the punished woman put back in her place. Thus Mary, image of the ideal woman as totally submissive and purged of any sexual or willful traits, in effect remains an unattainable ideal for real women, an ideal by which all women are judged and found lacking.

All the androcentric presuppositions discussed come together in the exclusion of woman from ecclesiastical leadership as priest, teacher, or minister. The identification of male authority and divine authority excludes women from being able to represent God or speak as the voice of God. As a person who cannot act autono-

mously or as an authority in her own right, she cannot exercise such authority in human society generally, much less in the church, the restored human society. As one deficient in moral self-control and rationality, she is incapable of teaching and of spiritual government.

Despite these pervasive androcentric assumptions of Christian theology, Christianity, as practiced, has been much more ambivalent. Androcentrism has partially shaped the practice of biblical and Christian religion, in the sense of actual exclusion of women from leadership and the indoctrination of an androcentric piety accepted as normative by women as well as men. But there have also been many instances of female religious power that are by no means contained by these definitions: prophetesses in both Old and New Testaments; female teachers, apostles, and local leaders in the New Testament; and holy women, healers, charismatics, and mystics who were by no means as submissive to male authority as these theories demand. Learned Christian women have studied scripture, founded religious orders and movements that they led in their own name, and written religious treatises of all kinds to express their religious experience and teachings. Yet, the evidence for this alternative history has only begun to be discovered in recent times, as the presuppositions of androcentrism itself are challenged by female religious scholars.

The final expression of androcentrism lies in its command of the transmission of tradition. Tradition is continually rewritten to conform to androcentric presuppositions. Alternative realities are erased from memory, or they are preserved in such a way as to deny them public authority. Religiously powerful women are defined in the tradition in such a way as to make them conform to male definitions of submission or else to be remembered in pejorative ways that allow this memory to function only as a caveat against female religious leadership. Thus, in the *Revelation to John*, a female prophet who is the leader of a community rivaling those of the prophet John is termed "Jezebel," the name by which Old Testament androcentrism rejected a queen who worshiped other gods. As long as it is impossible to imagine that Jezebel's gods might have been expressions of the divine as authentic as those of Elijah (or that the Jezebel of the *Revelation to John* was as authentic a prophet as John), androcentric readings of the Judeo-Christian tradition remain intact.

[*See* Women's Studies *and* God, *article on* God in Postbiblical Christianity.]

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ROSEMARY RADFORD RUETHER

ANDROGYNES. The androgyne (from the Greek *andros*, "man," and *gune*, "woman") is a creature that is half male and half female. In mythology, such a creature is usually a god and is sometimes called a hermaphrodite, after Hermaphroditus, son of Hermes and Aphrodite, who is said to have grown together with the nymph Salmacis (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 4.347–388). In religious parlance, androgyny is a much more comprehensive and abstract concept than is implied by the literal image of a creature simultaneously male and female in physical form. To say that God is androgynous is very different from saying that God is an androgyne. But if we limit ourselves to the relatively narrow interpretation of the bisexual god, usually a creator, we are still dealing with a very broad and important religious concept.

It is often said that androgynes are universal, or even archetypal. This is not true. It has been demonstrated that the androgyne is confined in its distribution either to areas formerly of the early "high civilizations" or to areas affected by influences from these centers. Nevertheless, this distribution does extend over a very wide area indeed, testifying to the great appeal of the image. The myth of the splitting apart of a bisexual creator is implicit in the Hebrew myth told in *Genesis* and is explicit in related texts from ancient Mesopotamia; it appears throughout the ancient Indo-European world and in the myths of Australian Aborigines, African tribes, North American and South American Indians, and Pacific islanders; and it is an important theme in medieval and Romantic European literature. Yet many religions,

particularly "primitive religions," have managed to survive without it, and it has very different meanings for many of the cultures in which it does appear. (See Baumann, 1955, p. 9; Kluckhohn, 1960, p. 52; Campbell, 1983, map on p. 142.)

One might attempt to construct a taxonomy of androgynes in various ways. Beginning with the visual image, androgynes may be horizontal (with breasts above and a phallus below) or, more often, vertical (with one side, usually the left, bearing a breast and half of a vagina and the other side bearing half of a phallus). One may also distinguish "good" and "bad" androgynes in two different senses: morally acceptable and symbolically successful. In the first sense, it must be noted that although androgynes are popularly supposed to stand for a kind of equality and balance between the sexes, since they are technically half male and half female, they more often represent a desirable or undesirable distortion of the male-female relationship or a tension based on an unequal distribution of power. Thus in some societies, divine or ritual androgynes play positive social roles, affirming culturally acceptable values, while others are despised as symbols of an undesirable blurring of categories.

In the second sense, androgynes may be regarded as "good," in the sense of symbolically successful, when the image presents a convincing fusion of the two polarities and as "bad" when the graft fails to "take" visually or philosophically—that is, when it is a mere juxtaposition of opposites rather than a true fusion. "Bad" androgynes often turn out, on closer inspection, to be not true androgynes but pseudo-androgynes, creatures with some sort of equivocal or ambiguous sexuality that disqualifies them from inclusion in the ranks of the straightforwardly male or female. These liminal figures include the eunuch, the transvestite (or sexual masquerader), the figure who undergoes a sex change or exchanges his sex with that of a person of the opposite sex, the pregnant male, the alternating androgyne (queen for a day, king for a day), and male-female twins.

Perhaps the most important way in which androgynes may be split into two groups, as it were, is in terms of their way of coming into existence. Some are the result of the fusing of separates, male and female; others are born in a fused form and subsequently split into a male and a female. In orthodox mythologies of creation, chaos is negative, something that must be transcended before life can begin; distinctions must therefore be made—male distinguished from female, one social class from another. This corresponds to the Freudian belief that the desire to return to undifferentiated chaos, to return to the womb or the oceanic feeling, is a wish for

death, for Thanatos (though it has been demonstrated that this is a facile and incorrect interpretation of the wish to return to chaos; see Eliade, 1965, p. 119). In the mythology of mysticism, however, chaos is positive; the desire to merge back into chaos is the goal of human existence, the supreme integration toward which one strives. In many rituals, too, androgyny is "a symbolic restoration of 'Chaos', of the undifferentiated unity that preceded the Creation, and this return to the homogeneous takes the form of a supreme regeneration, a prodigious increase of power" (ibid., pp. 114, 199, 122). The mystic striving toward positive chaos is a clear parallel to the Jungian integration of the individual, for it celebrates the merging of two apparently separate entities (the self and God) that are in fact one. Thus, fusing androgynes may be viewed as instances of positive, Jungian chaos, and splitting androgynes may be viewed as instances of negative, Freudian chaos. Let us consider these two types separately.

The Splitting Androgyne. The more dominant of the two types is the splitting androgyne, which appears in a variety of cultures, both Indo-European and "primitive." A few examples taken from very many will have to suffice to establish the general pattern.

Greek. Plato depicts Aristophanes as the author of a complex myth of the primeval androgyne:

In the ancient times there were three kinds of beings, each with four legs and four arms: male, female, and androgynous. They grew too powerful and conspired against the gods, and so Zeus sliced them in two. The parts derived from the whole males are the ancestors of those men who tend to homosexuality and pederasty; the parts derived from the whole females are the ancestors of women who incline to be lesbians. The androgynes, who are nowadays regarded with scorn, gave rise to men who are woman-lovers and adulterers, and to women who are man-lovers and adulteresses.

(*Symposium* 189e–191e)

The androgyne is explicitly denigrated in this myth, not only in the statement of reproach for its present-day physical manifestations but in the implication that creatures derived from it are excessively lustful; the splitting of the androgyne is responsible for the fact that we expend (and, by implication, waste) so much time and trouble trying to get back together again.

Judaic. No account of the myths of androgyny can fail to mention *Genesis*, though we shall discuss the myth of Adam and Eve at greater length in the context of European myths. The *midrash* on *Genesis* 1:27 explicitly states that when God created the first man he created him androgynous; thus Adam gave birth to Eve. If man be made in the image of God, the creator himself would be an androgyne, although there is nothing explicit about this in the text of *Genesis* itself. It is, however,

interesting to note that *Genesis* (2:24) does attribute to the origin of Eve from Adam the fact that, just as Plato noted in the same context, men and women have ever since sought to unite physically.

Indian. The earliest of all Indo-European androgynes, Sky-Earth (Dyāvā-Pṛthivī in the *Ṛgveda*) is a splitting androgyne: the first cosmogonic act is to separate the two halves. In the Upaniṣads, Prajāpati, the Lord of Creatures, becomes a more explicit androgyne:

In the beginning this world was Soul [*ātman*] alone, in the form of Puruṣa [the Man]. He had no joy, and desired a second. Now he was as large as a woman and a man in a close embrace, and so he caused his self to fall into two pieces, which became a husband and wife. Therefore it is said, "Oneself is like a half-fragment." He copulated with her and produced human beings. But then she thought, "How can he copulate with me when he has just produced me from himself? I will hide." She became a cow; he became a bull, copulated with her, and produced cattle. She became a mare; he a stallion. . . . Thus were born all pairs there are, even down to the ants.   (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 1.4.3–4)

The splitting of the androgyne is here tied directly to the more general, and nonsexual, splitting of the primeval man, Puruṣa [*see* Indian Religions, *article on* Mythic Themes]; androgyny is seen as a variant of sacrificial dismemberment. In other Indo-European myths, too, the primordial dismemberment is not of a man but of an androgyne. The incestuous implications of androgynous splitting and procreation are here made explicit; they continue to pose a moral problem for later Indian variants of this myth, in which the role of the primeval androgyne is played by Brahmā, and then by Śiva (cf. *Liṅga Purāṇa* 1.70).

North American. The Navajo say that First Man and First Woman had five sets of twins; the last four sets were each composed of a boy and a girl, but the first pair were barren hermaphrodites (Long, 1963, p. 53). The last four sets procreated, but the first set were the first people to die, and "she" (i.e., the female hermaphrodite of the pair) went to the underworld to become associated with the dead and the devils in the lower world (Spencer, 1947, p. 98). The male hermaphrodite simply dies; the female androgyne becomes the devil. Both are barren. Among the tribes of the Northwest Coast, too, mythic hermaphrodite dwarfs are killers, banished not to the underworld but to the moon (Boas, 1895, vol. 23, pt. 3, p. 53). Among the Zuni, however, one does find a central and positive androgynous creator, named Awonawilona ("he-she"; Stevenson, 1887, pp. 23, 37), an early precursor of nonsexist language and a powerful mythological figure.

African. Sudanese and Dogon art depicts horizontal androgynes, with breasts as well as penises. These fig-

ures may represent the primeval state of androgyny: man the way God made him, before the intervention of society made possible the perpetuation of the human race through the reduction of dangerously complete creatures to more manageable and useful halves. At birth every Dogon child has both a female soul and a male soul; at puberty every child undergoes ritual circumcision or clitoridectomy in order to remove the androgyny with which he or she is born.

> In so far as the child retains the prepuce or the clitoris—characteristics of the sex opposite to its own apparent sex—its masculinity and femininity are equally potent. It is not right, therefore, to compare an uncircumcised boy to a woman: he is, like an unexcised girl, both male and female. If this uncertainty as to his sex were to continue, he would never have any inclination for procreation.
>
> (Griaule, 1965, pp. 156–158)

The Dogon divine androgyne is a true androgyne, a creative figure containing both male and female physical and psychical elements; but it must be transformed into a human androgyne manqué, a figure whose complete nature has been defaced both physically and psychically. God may be an androgyne; but man must not.

The Fusing Androgyne. The fusing type of androgyne is originally created as a male and female in isolation and must fuse in order to create. The separate components are barren; only the androgyne is creative (in contrast with the splitting androgyne, which is creative only when the male and female parts have separated). The most common variant of the theme of the fusing androgyne is the Two-in-One or hierogamy (i.e., sacred marriage). In broader theological terms, this symbolizes the merging of complementary opposites—the *conjunctio oppositorum* (Eliade, 1965, pp. 103–125). But the more straightforward form of the fusing androgyne, in which the male and female partners each give up one half of their bodies to fuse into a single being, half male and half female, is relatively rare.

Indian. All early myths of the androgynous Śiva are myths of splitting androgynes; medieval Sanskrit texts and folk traditions, however, describe a fusing androgyne that arose when, out of passion, gratitude, or some other emotion, Śiva embraced Pārvatī so closely that their bodies fused into one. According to one account, Śiva was a beggar, but one day he smoked so much hashish that he could not go out on his usual rounds; Pārvatī begged in his place, and when she returned she fed him with the food she had collected, which so pleased Śiva that he embraced her violently and became one with her.

On another occasion, Pārvatī became jealous of Śiva's infatuation with another woman and left him. Śiva came to her and said, "You are the oblation and I am the fire; I am the sun and you are the moon. Therefore you should not cause a separation between us, as if we were distinct people." And as he said this, Śiva caused her to enter the side of his own body, as if she were hiding there in embarrassment, and their paired bodies became one, because of their love (*Skanda Purāṇa* 1.3.2.18–21).

Elsewhere, it is cynically remarked that Pārvatī took over half of Śiva's body in order to curb his philandering with other women. But the quintessentially fused Śaiva androgyne is the so-called *Śiva-liṅga*, or phallus, which is, in fact, almost always accompanied by the yoni, the symbol of the Goddess's sexual organ, and as such is an iconic, though not anthropomorphic, androgyne: the male is surrounded by the female, in a representation of sexual union.

North American. A more complex candidate for androgyny is the notorious North American trickster. Even though primarily male, he not only masquerades as a female but actually gives birth to children. He normally keeps his detached phallus in a box and is thus self-castrating (like many Greek androgynes); in order to have sexual intercourse, he removes the phallus from the box and sends it to the woman. What his character represents, however, is a coincidence of opposites far more general than androgyny: it is primeval chaos, in which the basic social, moral, sexual, and even gross physical distinctions are yet unmade (Radin, 1956). The trickster is thus androgynously creative and psychologically "full," but the bitter humor with which he is depicted and the tragedy that follows upon his creative enterprises produce a sardonic vision of theological "wholeness" and a satire on human sexual integration. This aspect of his nature has led many scholars to identify him as a devil rather than a god, but this is not a useful distinction in dealing with a character who is morally so protean as the androgyne. [*See also* Tricksters.]

The Problem of the Androgyne: Getting Together. From the preceding survey, selective and sketchy though it is, it becomes apparent that most cultures have felt more comfortable with the concept of the splitting androgyne than with that of the fusing androgyne. Androgyny is thus not always a symbol of perfect union and balance. Many myths point out that the permanently fused androgyne is, technically, the one creature in the world who is certain to be unable to copulate. As Alan Watts has remarked, the androgyne symbolizes a state "in which the erotic no longer has to be sought or pursued, because it is always present in its totality" (Watts, 1963, pp. 204–205). Yet the androgyne may also imply that the greatest longing may be felt in

complete union, when satiation is so near and yet so far; water, water everywhere, nor any drop to drink. Thus the androgyne may symbolize satiation without desire or desire without satiation.

Western androgynes, which are usually fused rather than splitting, are often unsuccessful. Many visual images of medieval androgynes that express complicated alchemical and occult concepts are ludicrous to the eye. Maurice Henry has produced a brilliant and hilarious series of cartoon androgynes who can neither fuse nor split and who are at last driven to saw themselves apart so that they can come together. A far more horrible sort of cartoon is Goya's *Disorderly Folly, Also Known as Disparate Matrimonial*, depicting a married couple grotesquely joined together back to back, like Siamese twins.

In our day, androgyny has once again become trendy, particularly in feminist and homosexual circles; but we are still not truly comfortable with the *physical* androgyne. Michel Foucault has pointed out, in his introduction to the memoirs of Herculine Barbin, a nineteenth-century French hermaphrodite, the ironic contrast between the Romantic *idea* of androgyny and the barbarism with which an actual androgyne was treated. This dichotomy can best be understood in the context of the history of modern European and Christian responses to the androgyne, a subject to which we now turn.

European Mysticism and Esotericism. The Judeo-Christian myth and theology of the androgyny of the primal man were successfully reinterpreted and revalorized by Jakob Boehme (1575–1624). For this great mystic and theosophist, Adam's sleep represents the first fall: Adam separated himself from the divine world and "imagined himself" immersed in nature, by which act he lowered himself and became earthly. The appearance of the sexes is a direct consequence of this first fall. According to certain of Boehme's followers, on seeing the animals copulate Adam was disturbed by desire and God gave him sex to avoid worse (texts in Benz, 1955, pp. 60–66). Another fundamental idea of Boehme, Gichtel, and other theosophists was that Sophia, the divine virgin, was originally part of the primal man. When he attempted to dominate her, the virgin separated herself from him. According to Gottfried Arnold (1666–1714), it was carnal desire that caused the primal being to lose this "occult bride." But even in his present fallen state, when a man loves a woman he always secretly desires this celestial virgin. Boehme compared the break-up of Adam's androgynous nature to Christ's crucifixion (texts in Benz, 1955, pp. 125ff.).

Jakob Boehme probably borrowed the idea of the androgyne not from Qabbalah but from alchemy; indeed, he makes use of alchemical terms. Actually, one of the names of the "philosophers' stone" was Rebis (lit., "two things"), the "double being," or the Hermetic androgyne. Rebis was born as a result of the union of Sol and Luna or, in alchemical terms, of sulfur and mercury (Eliade, 1965, pp. 102ff.).

The androgyne as the primal and final perfection became extremely popular with the theosophists of the eighteenth century, from Friedrich C. Oetinger (1702–1782) and Karl von Eckartshausen (1752–1803) to Michael Hahn (1758–1819), Pierre-Simon Ballanche (1776–1847), and their disciples (cf. Faivre, 1973, pp. 67ff.). Boehme was the principal source of inspiration, either directly or through Franz von Baader (1765–1841). According to Baader, the androgyne had existed at the beginning (Adam) and will be again at the end of time. Baader borrowed from Boehme the conception of Adam's first fall, the sleep in which his celestial companion was separated from him. But, thanks to Christ, man will again become an androgyne, like the angels.

Baader wrote that "the aim of marriage as a sacrament is the restoration of the celestial or angelic image of man as he should be." Sexual love should not be confused with the instinct for reproduction; its true function is "to help man and woman to integrate internally the complete human image, that is to say the divine and original image." Baader considered that a theology presenting "sin as a disintegration of man, and the redemption and resurrection as his reintegration" would conquer all other theologies (see the texts reproduced by Benz, 1955, pp. 219ff.).

To the German Romantics the androgyne was the perfect, "total" human being of the future. J. W. Ritter (1776–1810), a well-known doctor and friend of Novalis, sketched in his *Nachlass eines jungen Physikers* a whole philosophy of the androgyne. For Ritter the man of the future would be, like Christ, an androgyne. "Eve," he wrote, "was engendered by man without the aid of woman; Christ was engendered by woman without the aid of man; the androgyne will be born of the two. But the husband and wife will be fused together in a single flesh." The body that is to be born will then be immortal. Describing the new humanity of the future, Ritter uses alchemical language, a sign that alchemy was one of the German Romantics' sources for their revival of the myth of the androgyne.

Wilhelm von Humboldt took up the same subject in his youthful *Über die männliche und weibliche Form*, in which he dwells particularly on the divine androgyne. Friedrich Schlegel, too, envisaged the ideal of the androgyne in his essay "Über die Diotima," in which he attacks the value attached to an exclusively masculine or feminine character, a value produced, he charges,

only by education and modern custom. The goal toward which the human race should strive, he believed, is a progressive reintegration of the sexes, ending in androgyny (Eliade, 1965, pp. 98ff.).

From Balzac to Aleister Crowley. Balzac's *Séraphita* is undoubtedly the most attractive of his fantastic novels. Not because of the Swedenborgian theories with which it is imbued but because Balzac here succeeded in presenting with unparalleled force a fundamental theme of archaic anthropology: the androgyne considered as the exemplary image of the perfect man. Let us recall the novel's subject and setting. In a castle on the edge of the village of Jarvis, near the Stromfjord, lived a strange being of moving and melancholy beauty. Like certain other Balzac characters, he seemed to hide a terrible secret, an impenetrable mystery. But here it is not a secret to be compared with that of Vautrin, the master criminal who figures in several other Balzac novels. The character in *Séraphita* is not a man eaten up by his own destiny and in conflict with society. He is a being different in quality from the rest of mankind, and his mystery depends not on certain dark episodes in his past but on the nature of his own being. This mysterious personage loves and is loved by Minna, who sees him as a man, Séraphitus, and is also loved by Wilfred, in whose eyes he seems to be a woman, Séraphita.

This perfect androgyne was born of parents who had been disciples of Swedenborg. Although he has never left his own fjord, never opened a book, never spoken to any learned person or practiced any art, Séraphitus-Séraphita displays considerable erudition; his mental faculties surpass those of mortal men. Balzac describes with moving simplicity the nature of this androgyne, his solitary life and ecstasies in contemplation. All this is patently based on Swedenborg's doctrine, for the novel was primarily written to illustrate and comment on the Swedenborgian theories of the perfect man. But Balzac's androgyne hardly belongs to the earth. His spiritual life is entirely directed toward heaven. Séraphitus-Séraphita lives only to purify himself—and to love. Although Balzac does not expressly say so, one realizes that Séraphitus-Séraphita cannot leave the earth before he has known love. This is perhaps the last and most precious virtue: for two people of opposite sex to love *really* and jointly. Seraphic love no doubt, but not an abstract or generalized love all the same. Balzac's androgyne loves two well-individualized beings; he remains therefore in the concrete world of life. He is not an angel come down to earth; he is a perfect man, a complete being.

Séraphita (1834–1835) is the last great work of nineteenth-century European literature that has the myth of the androgyne as its central theme. Toward the end of the century, other writers—notably the so-called *décadents*—returned to the subject, but their works are mediocre if not frankly bad. One may mention as a curiosity Péladan's *L'androgyne* (1891), the eighth volume in a series of twenty novels entitled *La décadence latine*. In 1910 Péladan treated the subject again in his brochure *De l'androgyne* (in the series "Les idées et les formes"), which is not entirely without interest, despite its confusion of facts and its aberrations. The entire work of Péladan—whom no one has the courage to read today—seems to be dominated by the androgyne motif. Anatole France wrote that Péladan was "haunted by the idea of the hermaphrodite, which inspires all his books." But Péladan's whole production—like that of his contemporaries and models, Swinburne, Baudelaire, Huysmans—belongs to quite a different category from *Séraphita*. Péladan's heroes are perfect only in sensuality; the metaphysical significance of the perfect man had been degraded and finally lost in the second half of the nineteenth century.

French and English *décadents* have occasionally returned to the theme of the androgyne (cf. Mario Praz, 1951), but always in the form of a morbid or even satanic hermaphroditism (as did Aleister Crowley, for example). As in all the great spiritual crises of Europe, here once again we meet the degradation of the symbol. When the mind is no longer capable of perceiving the metaphysical significance of a symbol, it is understood at levels that become increasingly coarse. The androgyne has been understood by *décadent* writers simply as a hermaphrodite in whom both sexes exist anatomically and physiologically. They have been concerned not with a wholeness resulting from the fusion of the sexes but with a superabundance of erotic possibilities. Their subject has not been the appearance of a new type of humanity, in which the fusion of the sexes produces a new, unpolarized consciousness, but a self-styled sensual perfection, resulting from the active presence of both sexes in one.

This idea of the hermaphrodite has probably been encouraged by the study of certain ancient sculptures. But *décadent* writers have been unaware that the hermaphrodite represented in antiquity an ideal condition that men endeavored to achieve spiritually by means of rites; they have not known that if a child showed at birth any signs of hermaphroditism, it was killed by its own parents. In other words, the ancients considered an actual, anatomical hermaphrodite an aberration of nature or a sign of the gods' anger, and they consequently destroyed it out of hand. Only the ritual androgyne provided a model, because it implied not an augmentation of anatomical organs but, symbolically, the union of the magico-religious powers belonging to both sexes.

Some Modern Christian Theologies. In a youthful writing, *The Meaning of the Creative Act* (1916), Nikolai Berdiaev took up again the old *theologoumenon;* he proclaimed with vigor that the perfect man of the future will be androgynous, as Christ was (Eliade, 1965, p. 103, n. 5). An important ideological contribution was *Die Gnosis des Christentums*, by Georg Koepgen, published in Salzburg in 1939, with the episcopal imprimatur (but afterward placed on the Index). The work gained a certain popularity after C. G. Jung discussed it in his *Mysterium Coniunctionis*. According to Koepgen, "In the person of Jesus the male is united with the female. . . . If men and women can come together as equals in Christian worship, this has more than an accidental significance: it is the fulfillment of the androgyny that was made manifest in Christ" (*Die Gnosis*, p. 316). With regard to *Revelation* 14:4 ("Those are they that were not defiled with women; for they are virgins"), Koepgen asserts:

> Here the new androgynous form of existence becomes visible. Christianity is neither male nor female, it is male-female in the sense that the male paired with the female in Jesus' soul. In Jesus the tension and polaristic strife of sex are resolved in an androgynous unity. And the Church, as his heir, has taken this over from him: she too is androgynous.
>
> (ibid., p. 31)

As regards her constitution, the church is "hierarchically masculine, yet her soul is thoroughly feminine." "The virgin priest . . . fulfills in his soul the androgynous unity of male and female; he renders visible again the psychic dimension which Christ showed us for the first time when he revealed the 'manly virginity' of his soul" (ibid., p. 319; noted by Jung, 1963, pp. 373ff.). As Jung remarks, for Koepgen not only Christ is androgynous but the church as well. In the last analysis, any Christian is predestined to become an androgyne.

[*See also* Tricksters. *Other entries that deal with gender as a component of religious symbolism include* Masculine Sacrality; Feminine Sacrality; *and* Gender Roles.]

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WENDY DONIGER O'FLAHERTY
and MIRCEA ELIADE

ANESAKI MASAHARU (1873–1949), leader in the establishment of modern religious studies in Japan. While studying early Indian Buddhism at the Imperial (later Tokyo) University from 1893 to 1900, Anesaki became interested in Benjamin Kidd's theories of social evolution, Wilhelm Bender's "transcendental pantheism," and the philosophical analyses of religion developed by Eduard von Hartmann, Otto Pfleiderer, and Arthur Schopenhauer. His mentors at the university included Inoue Tetsujirō, under whom he studied Indian philosophy and Sanskrit, the sociologist Toyama Masakazu, the philosopher Raphael Koeber, and the ethicist Nakajima Rikizō. According to Anesaki, it was Nakajima who coined the term *shūkyōgaku* ("religious studies") to denote the objective, nonsectarian study of

religions as social and cultural phenomena. It was in this field of *shūkyōgaku*, as distinguished from earlier (largely sectarian) forms of religious study in Japan, that Anesaki made his lasting reputation.

In 1900 Anesaki went to Germany to continue his study of Schopenhauer and Sanskrit under Paul Deussen at Kiel, where he also worked with the Indologist Hermann Oldenberg. He studied in Berlin with the Indologist Richard von Barbe and the philosopher Theodor Weber, and in Leipzig with the linguist Ernst Windisch. After a brief stay in London, where he became acquainted with the Buddhist scholar T. W. Rhys Davids, Anesaki spent the winter of 1902–1903 in India, visiting Buddhist historical sights and attending lectures at the Central Hindu College in Banaras.

In 1905 Anesaki was named the first professor of *shūkyōgaku* at the Imperial University, a post he occupied for the next thirty years. In 1912 the seminar under his direction began the publication of *Shūkyōgaku*, a journal of broader scope than that of the university's respected journal of Indian philosophy, *Indo tetsugaku*. At the invitation of the American Indologist James Woods, Anesaki taught courses on Japanese religion at Harvard University from 1913 to 1915. He also lectured at Yale University and at the University of Chicago (1913), at the University of California (1918), and at the Collège de France (1919). After the great Kantō earthquake of 1923, Anesaki directed the reconstruction of the Imperial University Library in Tokyo. He retired from teaching in 1934 but continued to serve on various national and international educational commissions. He was the recipient of numerous academic honors, including a doctor of letters degree from Harvard in 1936.

The range of Anesaki's published work illustrates the diversity of his interests and his broad view of the study of religion. His research in the early development of Buddhism yielded, for example, his doctoral thesis, *Genshinbutsu to hosshinbutsu* (A Study of the Historical versus the Religious Aspects of the Buddha; published Tokyo, 1904), and *Kompon bukkyō* (Fundamental Buddhism; Tokyo, 1910). His lectures in the United States and Europe were the basis for several works in English; the best known of these are his *History of Japanese Religion* (London, 1923) and *Religious Life of the Japanese People* (Tokyo, 1938). He also wrote several articles on Buddhist and Japanese beliefs and practices for Hastings's *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*. Under the influence of his friend, the nationalist critic Takayama Chogyū, Anesaki became an adherent of the Nichiren sect and wrote a study of its founder, *Nichiren, the Buddhist Prophet* (Cambridge, 1916), which remains one of the most widely read of English books on Japanese religion. His documentary studies of Japan's sixteenth-

century Christian converts (Kirishitan) helped to establish this subject as a major research field.

Anesaki's works in Japanese demonstrated the application of Western concepts and methods and widened the perspective for religious studies in his own country. His translations, including that of Schopenhauer's *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (*Ishi to genshiki to shite no sekai*, Tokyo, 1910–1911), were particularly instrumental in this regard. His works in English are descriptive and somewhat impressionistic, and frequently rely on analogies to non-Asian traditions in order to make Japanese religions comprehensible to a non-Japanese readership. Nonetheless, Anesaki's English publications served for many decades as useful introductions to the study of Japanese religions.

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EDWARD KAMENS

ANGELS belong to the enormous variety of spiritual beings who mediate between the transcendental realm of the sacred and the profane world of man. [*See* Demons.] The term *angel* is specifically used in Western religions to distinguish benevolent from malevolent demons. In most other religions, however, the distinction between good and evil demons is less clear; their behavior depends on the situation and on the conduct of individuals and communities.

Origin and Function. The word *angel* is derived from the Greek *aggelos*, translated from the Hebrew *mal'akh*, meaning "messenger." The literal meaning of the word indicates the primary function of angels as divine messengers. They are sent by God to inform men of their ultimate being, purpose, and destiny.

The role of angels is most fully elaborated in religions based on revelation, such as Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. These religions emphasize the distance between man and God and, consequently, have

the greatest need for intermediaries between the two. In polytheistic religions the gap between man and the gods is less pronounced; angelic functions are often performed by the gods themselves in their human incarnations. In monistic religions, angelic intermediaries play a minor part since the gap between man and God is nonexistent. The whole cosmos is sacred; God (or the divine) and man share a common essence. Instead of coming from a single, distant, divine source, revelation comes from within, stimulated by meditation or the teachings of the enlightened, such as the *tīrthaṅkaras* (prophets or saints) in Jainism or the *bodhisattvas* (enlightened ones) in Buddhism. Nevertheless, in both polytheistic and monistic religions, spiritual beings similar to angels do exist to help individuals achieve a proper rapport with the gods and spirits. For example, *shen* in Chinese religion are benevolent spirits (sometimes the ghosts of ancestors) who are enlisted into the service of the living by appropriate sacrifices and rituals. In Shintō, *kami* are spirits of deities, ancestors, and even of natural objects, whose favor and help are won by reverence and pious obedience. Japanese Buddhists consider *kami* as manifestations of the gods, or *bodhisattvas*.

Judaism and Zoroastrianism. In early Hebrew thought, God appears and speaks directly to individuals (*Gn.* 3:8, *Ex.* 12:1). He also intervenes in human affairs, often acting violently and punitively (*Gn.* 22:1ff.; *Ex.* 4:24, 14:4; *2 Sm.* 24:1; *Ps.* 78:31ff.). God's savage nature reflects the mores of a nomadic, conquering tribe whose morality was based on ritual and taboo. Under the influence of the prophets and postexilic writers, these earlier conceptions were revised to reflect an ethic based on social justice. A new theodicy explained evil without directly implicating God. As a result, God became both more distant and more merciful. Angels and demons replaced him in his encounters with men, and Satan assumed his destructive powers (cf. *2 Sm.* 24:1 with *1 Chr.* 21:1).

Angels experienced a similar moral metamorphosis through the centuries. In early biblical stories (e.g., *Ps.* 78:49, *1 Sm.* 18:10), they can be malevolent and murderous. Later writers stress their benevolence, or at least their righteousness, in contrast to other, malevolent, spirits. The origin of the evil demons and their leader, Satan, was a subject of intense speculation in later Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. [*See* Satan.] The general view was that Satan and his followers were fallen angels, expelled from heaven for envy, pride, or lust.

The development of an elaborate angelology in Judaism was a consequence of the Babylonian exile (sixth century BCE) and the influence of Zoroastrianism. The Zoroastrian myth of the cosmic battle between Ahura

Mazdā ("benevolent deity") and Angra Mainyu ("hostile deity"), with their attendant armies of angels and devils, profoundly influenced the angelology and demonology of the Hebrew scriptures and the Apocrypha, which, in turn, influenced later Jewish, Christian, and Islamic thought. Like Ahura Mazdā, the Old Testament God, Yahveh, is surrounded by an angelic army. He is the "Lord of Hosts," and his warrior angels fight against the forces of evil led by Satan, who gradually assumes the characteristics of the archfiend, Angra Mainyu.

Judaism adopted the Zoroastrian division of the universe into three realms: heaven, earth, and hell. Heaven is the celestial region inhabited by God and his angels; earth, the terrestrial world of man, limited by time, space, cause and effect; hell, the subterranean world of chaos, darkness, and death, the abode of Satan and his demon followers. This tripartite scheme provided the foundation for the religious, metaphysical, and scientific ideas of Jews, Christians, and Muslims until it was undermined by the Copernican revolution in the sixteenth century. In this tripartite cosmos, the earth is an imperfect halfway house inhabited by man, a hybrid creature with conflicting impulses, ignorant of his origin, nature, and destiny. The primary function of the angels is to bridge the cosmic gap separating God and man. In Zoroastrianism, this gap was the result of the primordial battle between the gods that left man stranded in an alien world. In Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, the rift was the result of man's sin and consequent fall. Whatever the reason, humans have become alienated and no longer understand their relationship to their creator or the purpose of their creation. Because angels are able to assume human form, they can bridge the gulf between heaven and earth and reveal the divine plan, will, and law. In emphasizing the revelatory role of angels, Judaism followed Zoroastrianism. Vohu Manah ("good mind"), one of the Amesha Spentas ("holy immortals") in Zoroastrianism, appeared to Zarathushtra (Zoroaster) and revealed the true nature of God and his covenant with man.

In the Hebrew scriptures, angels perform the same functions as in Zoroastrianism: they praise and serve God, reveal divine truth, and act as extensions of the divine will, rewarding the good and punishing the wicked. They help humans understand God and achieve a proper rapport with him, and they conduct the souls of the righteous to heaven.

Angels can be merciless when they enforce the divine law and punish the wicked (*Ez.* 9). In their dealings with the righteous, however, they are models of care and concern. In the apocryphal *Book of Tobit* (second century BCE) the archangel Raphael guides the young hero Tobias on a dangerous journey and reveals the

magic formulas that protect him from the demon As- modeus and restore his father's sight. In his solicitude for Tobias, Raphael behaves like the guardian angels who became so important in the popular piety of later Judaism and Catholicism. These guardian angels were modeled after Zoroastrian spirits known as *fravashi*s, a cross between ancestral spirits, guardian spirits, and the immortal components of individuals. [*See* Fra- vashis.]

Two archangels are mentioned in the Hebrew scrip- tures: Michael ("like God"), the warrior leader of the heavenly hosts, and Gabriel ("man of God"), the heav- enly messenger (*Dn.* 8:16). Two other archangels are named in the Apocrypha: Raphael ("God has healed"), who appears in *Tobit*, and Uriel ("God is my light"), who appears in *2 Esdras*. Seven archangels, unnamed, are also mentioned in Tobit. In addition to these arch- angels, two angelic orders appear in the Hebrew scrip- tures: the six-winged Seraphim, who surround the di- vine throne and praise God (*Is.* 6:2ff.), and the Cherubim, described by Ezekiel (1:5ff.). Solomon placed two enormous images of winged cherubim, carved from olive wood and covered with gold, in the innermost part of the Temple, and God posted a cherub with a flaming sword at the gate of Eden to guard it after Adam and Eve's expulsion.

The angelology of later Judaism became increasingly elaborate as a result of the absorption of gnostic, Chris- tian, and popular beliefs.

Angels in Christianity. New Testament angels per- form the same functions as their Old Testament coun- terparts. Christian angelology, however, is more elabo- rate and reflects the influence of gnostic and popular beliefs. The gnostics, who flourished during the first four centuries of the common era, were a heterogeneous group with Christian, Jewish, and pagan offshoots, but they shared a dualistic view of the universe as a battle- ground for good and evil. They believed man to be a prisoner within a cosmos created by an evil demiurge. Man's mission lay in returning to the heavens from which he had come. To do this, a soul had to pass through the seven spheres, each of which was controlled by an angel. The angels allowed to pass through only those souls who addressed them with the proper names and recited the appropriate formulas. The knowledge of these names and formulas provided the gnostics with their name, which literally means "the knowing ones."

Many Christians as well as Jews accepted the gnostic belief that angels participated in creation and contrib- uted to the continuance of the cosmos. Clement of Al- exandria (AD 150?–215?) believed that angels controlled the movement of the stars and the four elements. The

identification of angels with stars explains their enor- mous number, beauty, and radiance. Some early Chris- tians, probably recruited from among the gnostics, wor- shiped angels and considered them more powerful mediators than Christ, which explains the polemic against angel worship in the New Testament (*Col.* 2:18, *Heb.* 1:4ff.). The gnostic invocations to angels contrib- uted to the angelic magic that developed in popular Ju- daism, Christianity, and Islam.

Like the angels in the Hebrew scriptures, Christian angels are God's messengers and ministers. They an- nounced the birth of Christ and authenticated his mis- sion on earth, as well as the mission of the apostles, saints, and martyrs. Angels are actively involved in the daily lives of Christians. They preside over the sacra- ments and are therefore present at the most significant moments in a Christian's life. They will announce the Last Judgment and separate the just from the unjust. The archangel Michael weighs the souls of the dead. An- gels help Christians achieve salvation in countless ways; no service is beneath them. They carry the prayers of the faithful to God. They strengthen the weak and comfort the oppressed, particularly martyrs. Ac- cording to hagiographic literature, they even cooked for a monastery of Franciscans whenever the chef, Diego, was incapacitated by ecstasy. Legend has it that the guardian angels of children occupy a privileged place in heaven, close to God (*Mt.* 18:10).

Angels in Islam. Islamic angelology closely follows Judaic and Christian patterns. God sits on his throne in the seventh heaven surrounded by angels, who serve him as ministers and attendants serve an earthly king. According to Islamic tradition, angels revealed the Qur'ān to Muḥammad. But, mistrusting the source of his revelation and fearing he was possessed by *jinn* or devils, Muḥammad was about to throw himself off a mountain when Jibril (Gabriel) appeared and confirmed him as God's prophet. As the angel of revelation, Jibril took Muḥammad (mounted on the winged steed Buraq) on a tour of the seven heavens. Other angels are men- tioned in the Qur'ān. Mikal (Michael) provides men with food and knowledge; 'Izra'il is the angel of death; Isafal places souls in bodies and sounds the trumpet sig- naling the Last Judgment.

According to popular belief, a group of female angelic beings, the *ḥūrī*s, inhabit the Muslim paradise and have the specific function of providing male Muslims with erotic delight. The *ḥūrī*s are similar to the enchanting and sexually skilled *apsara*s in the Hindu heavens. The sexuality of both groups is in marked contrast to the asexuality of Christian angels.

Angelic Hierarchies. Angels are usually grouped in four or seven orders. Four orders are described in the

Sibylline Oracles, Roman sacred books with Jewish and Christian interpolations. The number four represents the four cardinal points and signifies perfection. As the number of known "planets" (five visible planets plus the sun and the moon), seven played an important part in Babylonian astronomy. The influence of Babylonian science on Zoroastrianism is suggested by the significance that the number seven assumed in Zoroastrian cosmology. The seven Holy Immortals are identified with the seven planets and the seven spheres in which the planets were believed to move. Opposed to the Holy Immortals were seven evil spirits, ancestors of the Christian seven deadly sins. Gnostics recognized seven orders of angels and identified them with the seven spheres. Seven angelic orders are enumerated in the New Testament: Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels. Clement of Alexandria, along with other early Christian theologians, accepted these seven orders.

In the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite (late fifth century), the various strands of Jewish and Christian angelology were united in a systematic whole. To the seven angelic orders mentioned in the New Testament, Dionysius added the two orders mentioned in the Old Testament, the Cherubim and the Seraphim, arranging the total of nine orders into three distinct hierarchies with three choirs apiece. (Thus three, the number of the Trinity, is repeated three times.) The highest of these three new orders, comprising Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones, was dedicated to the contemplation of God. The second order, comprising Dominions, Virtues, and Powers, governed the universe, while the third order, comprising Principalities, Archangels, and Angels, executed the orders of their superiors.

Characteristics. While the functions of angels were clearly defined, their nature and relationship to God was, and still is, a matter of controversy. In Zoroastrianism, the seven Holy Immortals emanate from Ahura Mazdā and are, consequently, divine. In the various gnostic systems, a bewildering variety of emanations mediate between God and man. For example, in Manichaeism (which competed with Christianity during the third century), a great number of angelic beings emanate from the "father of greatness," including the "twelve light diadems," the "twelve aeons," the "friends of lights," and others. The emphasis on monotheism in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam should have precluded similar pantheistic emanations, but the designation of angels as *benei elohim*, or "sons of God" (*Ps.* 29:1, 89:7), encouraged the popular belief that they were divine or semidivine beings entitled to be worshiped in their own right. Although officially condemned, the belief that divine spirits (demons, fairies, elves, *jinn*, etc.) were ame-

nable to human manipulation persisted in the popular imagination and provided the rationale for magic.

Although it was agreed that angels were spiritual beings, opinion varied as to whether the bodies they assumed were material or simply gave the illusion of being so. Augustine believed they were material. Dionysius the Areopagite disagreed and asserted that angels were pure spirits, a view that prevailed in later Christianity and that was affirmed by Thomas Aquinas.

Iconography. The iconography of angels was not fixed until the middle of the fifth century, by which time the iconophobia that Christianity had inherited from Judaism had all but disappeared. Struggling with the problem of how to depict the indescribable, Christian artists found little help in the scriptures. The angels described there are either indistinguishable from mortal young men (*Gn.* 18:2ff., 19:1ff.) or bizarre figures, impossible to depict. The angels described by Ezekiel, for example, have four wings and four faces (lion, ox, eagle, and man) and calves' feet. They seem to move on fiery wheels. Such monstrous combinations were characteristic of Assyrian and Egyptian art and symbolized the unity of diverse powers: the strength and majesty of the lion, the patience and industry of the ox, the swiftness of winged creatures, the intelligence of man.

In the early Christian period, artists represented angels as wingless youths. But with the increasing emphasis on the spirituality of angels, a new model was sought—and found—in the figure of an adolescent male with two wings. The identification of spirits with winged figures predates the Hebrew scriptures, going back to the Egyptian representation of the sun god Horus as a winged disk. A basalt relief, dating from 1000 BCE and excavated at Tell Halaf, depicts a six-winged creature similar to the seraphim described by Isaiah (Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore). Other winged figures available as models were Assyrian palace guardians, Greek victories, and figures of the Greek god Hermes. Medallions of Mercury have been found with the god's name scratched out and replaced by the name *Michael;* they belonged to Christian converts, who were reluctant to discard their pagan talismans.

In their role as divine messengers and ministers, angels play an important part in Christian art. Over the years, various attributes were devised to distinguish the different angelic orders. Following Isaiah, the Seraphim are sometimes depicted with six wings and carrying shields upon which the word *sanctus* has been written three times. They are surrounded by flames to symbolize their intense love of God. The Cherubim are often surrounded by eyes or painted with peacock feathers (with their "eyes") to symbolize their penetrating intelligence. The Dominions carry spears and swords, em-

blems of God's power. The Virtues carry the instruments of the Passion (crown of thorns, cross, and spear). As protectors of mankind, the Powers carry flaming swords. As the guardians of sovereigns, the Principalities also carry swords and scepters. Archangels have distinctive symbols and attributes: Michael, the leader of the heavenly hosts, is fully armed; Gabriel carries the lily of the Annunciation; Raphael is often pictured with Tobias.

The Christian emphasis on the spirituality of angels supported the idea that they were asexual, which explains why they were often portrayed without bodies, as winged heads. The concept of angels as asexual beings was also furthered by the heterogeneous iconographic traditions upon which Christian artists had drawn, as well as by the linguistic confusion arising from gender classifications in Latin and Greek. Although the Greek word *aggelos* is a masculine noun, angels were identified with feminine figures of Victory (Nike) and portrayed as embodiments of beauty, truth, love, justice, and compassion, qualities that are represented in Latin and Greek by feminine nouns. Up to the thirteenth century, although they were portrayed without sexual attributes, angels were generally thought of as adolescent males. But the late Gothic emphasis on the ideal beauty of angels led to the development of feminine angels and to an extreme etherealization of angelic forms. Then, with the rediscovery of classical art in the Renaissance, angels became increasingly naturalistic. Cupid became the model for angels as pudgy infants, and the study of classical nudes led to the portrayal of angels as robust, titanic figures (e.g., the angels in Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*).

Angels in the Modern World. The Copernican revolution undermined the Western tradition of belief in angels. The tripartite division of the universe no longer made sense in a cosmological scheme in which the earth was one planet among others revolving around the sun in a possibly infinite universe. Since there was no longer an up or a down, or a perfect, unchanging heaven, the physical existence of heaven and hell was also questioned.

But whereas the physical sciences undermined belief in the concrete reality of heaven, hell, angels, and devils, the psychological discoveries of the last two centuries have given these entities new plausibility as psychic phenomena. Sigmund Freud located the tripartite cosmos in the structure of the personality itself, with its division into superego, ego, and id. C. G. Jung postulated the existence of a collective unconscious and discussed mythology and religion in terms of the "primordial images," or "archetypes," in the collective unconscious, which every human being inherits. With the

insights into psychic conflict provided by modern psychology, the image of angels and devils fighting over individual souls assumes new meaning and relevance. [*See* Demons, *article on* Psychological Perspectives.]

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ALLISON COUDERT

ANGLICANISM, also called the Anglican communion, is a federation of autonomous national and regional churches in full intercommunion through the archbishop of Canterbury of the Church of England. The Anglican churches share a tradition of doctrine, polity, and liturgy stemming from the English Reformation in the sixteenth century. Often classified as "Protestant," they also claim a "Catholic" heritage of faith and order from the ancient, undivided church.

Characteristic of Anglicanism is the endeavor to hold together in a comprehensive middle way *(via media)* the tensions of its Protestant and Catholic elements. This endeavor is a legacy of the English Reformation, which was essentially an act of state and not a popular movement. Without the coercive power of the state, Anglicanism might have died aborning. The long reign of Queen Elizabeth I (r. 1558–1603) ensured its survival.

Like her father, Henry VIII (r. 1509–1547), Elizabeth was determined to rule both church and state. The Act of Supremacy of 1559 mitigated Henry's title of "supreme head in earth of the Church of England" (1534) to that of "supreme governor." Elizabeth had no intention of submitting England to any papal authority, which her sister, Mary I (r. 1553–1558), had restored. She was equally adamant against agitation for a presbyterian form of church government that would dispense with the royal supremacy, episcopacy, and the liturgy.

The two editions of *The Book of Common Prayer*, authorized in 1549 and 1552 under Edward VI (r. 1547–1553), were chiefly the work of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer of Canterbury (1533–1556), whom Queen Mary had burned as a heretic. [*See also the biography of Cran-*

mer.] Both books were Protestant in doctrine; but many ceremonies and ornaments from the Latin rites, retained in 1549, were eliminated in 1552. Elizabeth preferred the 1549 prayer book. Parliament would accept only that of 1552, but the queen managed to make a few substantial changes in it. Pejorative references to the bishop of Rome were omitted. The 1549 words of administration at Communion were added. These clearly identified the consecrated bread and wine with the Body and Blood of Christ. Elizabeth eliminated a rubric stating that kneeling to receive Communion did not imply adoration of "any real and essential presence there being of Christ's natural flesh and blood"; but she was never able to enforce a new rubric restoring the ornaments of the church as they had been specified in the second year of Edward VI's reign.

Many episcopal sees, including Canterbury, were vacant at Elizabeth's accession. Most of Mary's bishops were deprived of their offices for refusal to accept the new settlement. Careful to maintain the episcopal succession, Elizabeth chose Matthew Parker, a moderate reformer and a friend and admirer of Cranmer, for her archbishop of Canterbury. He was consecrated on 17 December 1559 by two bishops from Henry's time and two from Edward's. Vacant sees were then filled with the queen's supporters.

In 1571, Parliament approved the Thirty-nine Articles, the only official confessional statement of Anglicanism, still printed in most editions of the prayer book. They are not a complete system of doctrine, but point out differences from Roman Catholicism and Anabaptism and indicate nuanced agreement with Lutheran and Reformed positions. The queen added in Article 20 the statement: "The Church hath power to decree Rites and Ceremonies."

Elizabeth's settlement remains the foundation of Anglicanism. It affirms the canonical scriptures to be the final arbiter in all matters of doctrine and to contain all things necessary to salvation. Traditions of the ancient church and teachings of the early church fathers, unless contrary to scripture, are treasured. The dogmatic decisions of the first four ecumenical councils on the Trinity and Incarnation are accepted. Anglican liturgies regularly use the Apostles' and Nicene creeds, and occasionally in some places the Athanasian Creed (Quicunque vult).

Today most Anglicans accept as reasonable modern methods of literary and historical criticism of the scriptures and other religious documents. Anglicanism has never had a dominant theologian such as Thomas Aquinas, Luther, or Calvin. The apologetic work of Richard Hooker (1554–1600), *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, is still influential, with its appeal to scripture,

church tradition, reason, and experience. [*See the biography of Hooker.*] Anglican theology tends to be biblical, pastoral, and apologetic rather than dogmatic or confessional.

Anglican polity is episcopal and preserves the ordained orders of bishops, presbyter-priests, and deacons that go back to apostolic times. There is no official doctrine of episcopacy. Some Anglicans consider it to be essential, others to be needful for the well-ordering or fullness of a truly catholic church. In all negotiations for unity or intercommunion with other churches, Anglicans insist that an unbroken succession of bishops, together with the other two orders, be maintained.

All Anglican churches are constitutionally governed, each church having its own appropriate canons for executive and legislative authorities. Bishops, clergy, and laity participate in all synodical decision making, but a consensus of these orders, voting separately, is necessary for decisions about major doctrinal, liturgical, or canonical matters. Outside England, bishops are generally elected by a synod of the diocese in which they will serve, subject to confirmation by other bishops and representative clergy and laity from each diocese.

The Church of England is today the only Anglican church that is state-established. The archbishop of Canterbury has a primacy of honor among all Anglican bishops, but he has no jurisdiction outside of his own diocese and province. The Crown, after appropriate consultations, nominates the English bishops, who are then elected by their respective cathedral chapters. Parliament retains final control over doctrine and liturgy, but the Synodical Government Measure of 1969 gave the English church large freedom to order its internal life through a General Synod of bishops, clergy, and laity.

In addition to the episcopate, Anglicanism is bonded by a common liturgy, contained in various recensions of *The Book of Common Prayer*, based either upon the Elizabethan version of 1559 or that of 1549. Use of the prayer book is prescribed in all Anglican churches. With the Bible and a hymnal, it provides everything needed for the churches' rites and ceremonies. The prayer book has been in continuous use since the sixteenth century, except for the years of the English Commonwealth (1645–1660), when it was proscribed in public and private use. It is the only vernacular liturgy of the Reformation period still in use.

The prayer-book formularies, many of them derived from the ancient church, are a principal source of doctrine and a primary basis of the spirituality of both clergy and laity. The daily and Sunday liturgies are set within the framework of the traditional seasons of the Christian year and fixed feasts of Christ and the saints. The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper (also

TABLE 1. *The Archibishops of Canterbury*. For those consecrated as bishop prior to becoming archbishop of Canterbury, the year of consecration is noted. Abbreviations: d. = died; dep. = deposed; depr. = deprived; exp. = expelled; res. = resigned; rest. = restored; ret. = retired; trans. = translated to another see.

No.	Name	Made a Bishop	Years as Archbishop	No.	Name	Made a Bishop	Years as Archbishop
1	Augustine	597	601–604	54	Thomas Bradwardine		1349
2	Laurentius	604	604–619	55	Simon Islip		1349–1366
3	Mellitus	604	619–624	56	Simon Langham	1362	1366–res. 1368
4	Justus	604	624–627	57	William Whittlesey	1362	1368–1374
5	Honorius		627–653	58	Simon Sudbury	1362	1375–1381
6	Deusdedit		655–664	59	William Courtenay	1370	1381–1396
7	Theodore of Tarsus		668–690	60	Thomas Arundel	1374	1396–trans. 1397
8	Beorhtweald		693–731	61	Roger Walden		1398–depr. 1399; d. 1406
9	Tatwine		731–734				
10	Nothelm		735–739		Thomas Arundel		rest. 1399–1414
11	Cuthbeorht	736	740–760	62	Henry Chichele	1408	1414–1443
12	Breguwine		761–764	63	John Stafford	1425	1443–1452
13	Jænbeorht		765–792	64	John Kemp	1419	1452–1454
14	Æthelheard		793–805	65	Thomas Bourchier	1435	1454–1486
15	Wulfred		805–832	66	John Morton	1479	1486–1500
16	Feologild		832	67	Henry Dean	1496	1501–1503
17	Ceolnoth		833–870	68	William Warham	1502	1503–1532
18	Æthelred		870–889	69	Thomas Cranmer		1533–1556
19	Plegmund		890–914	70	Reginald Pole		1556–1558
20	Æthelhelm	909	914–923	71	Matthew Parker		1559–1575
21	Wulfhelm	914	923–942	72	Edmund Grindal	1559	1576–1583
22	Oda	923	942–958	73	John Whitgift	1577	1583–1604
23	Ælfsige	951	959	74	Richard Bancroft	1597	1604–1610
24	Beorhthelm	956	959–dep. 959	75	George Abbot	1609	1611–1633
25	Dunstan	957	960–988	76	William Laud	1621	1633–1645
26	Æthelgar	980	988–990	77	William Juxon	1633	1660–1663
27	Sigeric	985	990–994	78	Gilbert Sheldon	1660	1663–1677
28	Ælfric	990	995–1005	79	William Sancroft		1678–depr. 1691; d. 1693
29	Ælfheah (Alphege)	984	1005–1012 [martyred]				
				80	John Tillotson		1691–1694
30	Lyfing	999	1013–1020	81	Thomas Tenison	1692	1695–1715
31	Æthelnoth		1020–1038	82	William Wake	1705	1716–1737
32	Eadsige	1035	1038–1050	83	John Potter	1715	1737–1747
33	Robert of Jumièges	1044	1051–exp. 1052; d. 1070	84	Thomas Herring	1738	1747–1757
				85	Matthew Hutton	1743	1757–1758
34	Stigand	1043	1052–dep. 1070; d. 1072	86	Thomas Secker	1735	1758–1768
				87	Frederick Cornwallis	1750	1768–1783
35	Lanfranc		1070–1089	88	John Moore	1775	1783–1805
36	Anselm		1093–1109	89	Charles Manners Sutton	1792	1805–1828
37	Ralph d'Escures	1108	1114–1122	90	William Howley	1813	1828–1848
38	William de Corbeil		1123–1136	91	John Bird Sumner	1828	1848–1862
39	Theobald		1139–1161	92	Charles Thomas Longley	1836	1862–1868
40	Thomas Becket		1162–1170	93	Archibald Campbell Tait	1856	1868–1882
41	Richard (of Dover)		1174–1184	94	Edward White Benson	1877	1883–1896
42	Baldwin	1180	1185–1190	95	Frederick Temple	1869	1896–1902
43	Hubert Walter	1189	1193–1205	96	Randall Thomas Davidson	1891	1903–ret. 1928; d. 1930
44	Stephen Langton		1207–1228				
45	Richard le Grant		1229–1231	97	Cosmo Gordon Lang	1901	1928–ret. 1942; d. 1944
46	Edmund Rich		1234–1240				
47	Boniface of Savoy		1245–1270	98	William Temple	1921	1942–1944
48	Robert Kilwardby		1273–1278	99	Geoffrey Francis Fisher	1932	1945–ret. 1961; d. 1972
49	John Pecham (Peckham)		1279–1292				
50	Robert Winchelsey		1294–1313	100	Arthur Michael Ramsey	1952	1961–ret. 1974
51	Walter Reynolds	1308	1313–1327	101	Frederick Donald Coggan	1956	1974–ret. 1980
52	Simon Mepeham		1328–1333	102	Robert Alexander Kennedy Runcie	1970	1980–
53	John Stratford	1323	1333–1348				

called Holy Communion or Eucharist) are considered generally necessary to salvation.

Valid baptism is by water "in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Persons baptized in infancy are expected, at a competent age, to reaffirm the baptismal promises made by parents or sponsors, at which time they receive confirmation by a bishop. The Eucharist, with invariable elements of bread and wine, consecrated by a thanksgiving prayer that includes Christ's "words of institution" at the Last Supper, is a memorial of Christ's once-for-all redemptive acts, in which Christ is objectively present and effectually received in faith.

For almost three centuries the expansion of Anglicanism was hindered by the Church of England's lack of any overall missionary strategy and its concept of a church that must be established by the state and sufficiently endowed. Within the British Isles, the Church in Wales, whose roots go back to the ancient church in Roman Britain, was part of the province of Canterbury from the Norman Conquest until its disestablishment and disendowment in 1920. It now uses Welsh as well as English in its liturgy.

The English Reformation in Ireland was rejected by 90 percent of the people. Yet not until 1870 was the (Anglican) Church of Ireland disestablished and largely disendowed. Four Anglican dioceses now straddle the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Old enmities between the Irish church and its predominant Roman Catholic neighbor are now greatly attenuated.

The Reformation in Scotland was predominantly presbyterian. A precarious Anglican episcopate was maintained by the Stuart sovereigns. For its loyalty to James II and his male descendants after their deposition by Parliament, the Scottish Episcopal church was disestablished in 1689 and subjected to penal laws between 1715 and 1792. Yet it maintained its episcopal succession, revised its liturgy, and in 1784 consecrated the first American bishop, Samuel Seabury of Connecticut (1729–1797).

Beginning in Virginia in 1607, the English church came to be established in the American colonies from Maryland southward and in New York City. Except in Virginia, Anglicans were outnumbered in the other colonies by religious dissidents and refugees. The bishop of London exercised general supervision, yet no bishop ever visited America during the colonial period.

After a brief visit to Maryland, the Reverend Thomas Bray (1658–1730) founded in 1701 the voluntary Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG). Until the American Revolution the SPG sent more than three hundred missionaries into the colonies.

The Revolution decimated these accomplishments, with the Anglican clergy and laity divided between American patriots and loyalists to the British Crown.

With independence, all SPG support was withdrawn. A large proportion of clergy and laity had left for England or Canada. There were no more establishments, and in Virginia disendowment also followed. The remnant of clergy and laity, both patriots and loyalists, began to organize in state conventions. The consecration of Bishop Seabury for Connecticut by Scottish bishops, who were considered schismatic by the Church of England, spurred the English bishops to obtain an act of Parliament in June 1786 enabling them to consecrate American bishops without the customary oaths of obedience to the royal supremacy and the archbishop of Canterbury. Three Americans were so consecrated: for Pennsylvania and New York in 1787 and for Virginia in 1790.

Under the leadership of Bishop William White of Pennsylvania (1748–1836) and Bishop Seabury, a national church was formed at a general convention in 1789, which adopted a constitution, canons, and a revised prayer book. By the General Convention in 1835, the Episcopal church was strong enough to begin concerted missionary strategy and it organized the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, which to this day includes all its baptized members. A bishop was chosen to organize dioceses on the western frontier; and a bishop was resident in China in 1844 and in Japan in 1874. Liberia received its first bishop in 1851.

In England, evangelical Anglicans, influenced by the revival movement of the Wesleys, in the late eighteenth century formed the Church Missionary Society, whose aims were comparable to those of the SPG. Later, other voluntary missionary societies, with special areas of interest, arose. The Church of England was slow, however, in providing bishops for its burgeoning missions overseas, and voluntary societies could not legally do so. Canada received its first bishop in 1787, followed by India in 1814, the West Indies in 1824, Australia in 1836, New Zealand in 1841, and South Africa in 1847.

By the 1860s two internal conflicts were disturbing many of the Anglican churches: the emergence in some churches of modern biblical criticism and the rise of ritual and ceremonial practices consequent to the Tractarian (or Oxford) Movement of the 1830s and 1840s, which emphasized the Catholic heritage of Anglicanism. At the request of the Canadian bishops, and with the counsel of his own convocation, Archbishop Longley of Canterbury invited all Anglican bishops to meet at his palace of Lambeth in London in 1867 for common consultation and encouragement. Seventy-six bishops attended. The success of this meeting led to similar Lam-

beth Conferences at approximately ten-year intervals, except when the two world wars intervened.

The encyclical letters, resolutions, and reports of these conferences have no legislative, but only advisory, authority. They deal with internal Anglican affairs, ecumenical relations, and important social and ethical issues. The 1958 conference was the first to invite representative observers from other churches, Eastern and Western, to attend. Anglican congresses in Minneapolis (1954) and Toronto (1964), of bishops and clergy and lay delegates from most of the Anglican dioceses, have with Lambeth (1958 and 1968) opened the way to new structures of Anglican intercommunication.

In 1960 the first Anglican executive officer, serving under the archbishop of Canterbury, was chosen. His duties were to visit and assess the problems of the various Anglican churches and to promote communication and common strategy for mission among them. In 1971 the Anglican Consultative Council came into being, and the Anglican executive officer became its secretary general. The council meets every two or three years in various parts of the Anglican world. The archbishop of Canterbury is its president, but the council elects its own chairman; to date three of them have been laypersons. Members consist of representative bishops, clergy, and laity of the several Anglican churches. Its concerns are much the same as those of the Lambeth Conferences, and like them it has no legislative authority.

Anglicanism is much involved in endeavors for Christian unity. The 1888 Lambeth Conference proposed a fourfold basis for negotiations: the scriptures as "the rule and ultimate standard of faith"; the Apostles' and Nicene creeds as "sufficient statement of the Christian faith"; the sacraments of baptism and the Supper of the Lord as instituted by Christ; and "the Historic Episcopate, locally adapted . . . to the varying needs of nations and peoples." This "Lambeth Quadrilateral" has been constantly reaffirmed.

The Episcopal church, under the leadership of Bishop Charles Henry Brent (1862–1929), planned the first World Conference on Faith and Order at Lausanne in 1927, over which Brent presided. Delegates from more than one hundred Protestant and Eastern Orthodox churches attended. This movement became part of the World Council of Churches, constituted in 1948.

At Bonn in 1931 the Anglican communion entered into an agreement with the Old Catholic churches of the Union of Utrecht (1889) for full intercommunion, which stated that this does "not require from either Communion the acceptance of all doctrinal opinion, sacramental devotion, or liturgical practice characteristic of the other, but implies that each believes the other to hold all the essentials of the Christian Faith." This concordat has been the basis of all intercommunion with non-Anglican episcopal churches, which Anglicans call the Wider Episcopal Fellowship.

A member of this fellowship is the Philippine Independent Catholic church, which split off from the Roman Catholic church in 1902 and in 1948 requested and received from the Episcopal church the historical episcopal succession. In 1961 full intercommunion was established, and in 1965 the Philippine church became a member of the confederation of Old Catholic churches. A unique development began when Anglican dioceses joined with other Protestant churches in forming the Church of South India in 1947, with Anglicans providing the historical episcopate. The churches of North India, of Pakistan, and (after national independence) of Bangladesh were subsequently formed on the same basis. Intercommunion has also been established with the ancient Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar in India.

Serious efforts to achieve the future reunion of Anglicanism with the Roman Catholic church began in an official visit of Archbishop Ramsey of Canterbury with Pope Paul VI in March 1966. A joint preparatory commission in 1967–1968 sorted major theological issues for dialogue and made recommendations for areas of cooperation. Between 1970 and 1981 the Anglican–Roman Catholic International Commission published substantial agreements on eucharistic doctrine, ministry, and ordination and two agreements on authority in the church. These were gathered, with some elucidations, in the commission's *Final Report* (1982). When Pope John Paul II visited Britain in 1982, he and Archbishop Runcie signed the "Common Declaration" at Canterbury Cathedral on 29 June for a new commission to study further theological issues, pastoral problems, and practical steps for "the next stage" toward unity.

Anglican-Lutheran international dialogues took place between 1970 and 1972. The ensuing report has been influential in an official Lutheran-Episcopal dialogue in the United States. In September 1982 three Lutheran bodies, in the process of uniting, agreed with the Episcopal church to celebrate an interim shared Eucharist on specified occasions as a step toward closer unity in doctrine, liturgy, and ministry.

Such dialogues recall expectations voiced in the encyclical letter of the 1948 Lambeth Conference that, no doubt, was influenced by the formation of the Church of South India the year before:

Reunion of any part of our Communion with other denominations in its own area must make the resulting Church no longer simply Anglican, but something more comprehensive.

. . . The Anglican Communion would be merged in a much larger Communion of National or Regional Churches, in full communion with one another, united in all the terms of what is known as the Lambeth Quadrilateral.

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MASSEY H. SHEPHERD, JR.

ANIMALS. In all cultures, the symbolization of animals is an essential feature in reflections about the nature of humanity, of the characteristics of individuals and their societies, of the surrounding world and its forces, and of the cosmos as a whole. Human beings define themselves and their place in the world by integrating themselves with, or opposing themselves to, the other inhabitants of the universe. Even in societies with strong traditions of anthropomorphic deities, animals are an essential element of religious and social thought. [*See also* Anthropomorphism.] Animals are often considered to have a special relationship to the divine, an important place in myths and sagas, a critical role (directly or symbolically) in ritual, and important symbolic roles as emblems of social groups and categories, metaphorical realizations of human desires and experiences, and reifications of the abstract processes that govern the universe. The variety of ideas about animals and the role they play in the world's religions seems endless and continues to be an object of fascination to scholars.

Wherever they appear, animal symbols are used to convey the deepest and most abstruse dimensions of human existence. They are symbols of core values and categories, representations of the most fundamental ideas and images of a culture. As core symbols, they are multivalent, complex, antinomic, used simultaneously to capture and display many different images and meanings at many different levels. As core symbols, they also serve to link other domains of symbolic discourse, creating juxtapositions and contrasts of images from which people derive meaning and from which they generate narrative forms. The natural realm of animals is an important part of the way in which people project their knowledge and experience through symbolic discourse.

Animal symbols are often used to express the fundamental ideas of selfness and otherness that lie at the basis of moral and religious thought. In being both similar to humans in some ways and dissimilar in others, animals provide the basis for many other dialectic aspects of human thought and may represent categories of sacred and profane, wild and civilized, natural and cultural, immoral and moral, inchoate and formed, material and essential, mundane and divine. Animal symbols represent the antinomies of living, the existence of the sacred in the profane, the wild in the civilized, the immoral in the moral, the past in the present, and so forth. Thus, people are able to use animal symbols to create analogies that can be extended to the relationship of humans to the divine. At their most simplistic, such analogies might state that animals are to humans as humans are to gods, but the equations by which cultures express their ideas of the nature of humanity and divinity can be extraordinarily complex. Such complexities may be displayed either by the complexity of the animal images themselves, so that different animals are represented as becoming conjoined in "unnatural" configurations—centaurs, sphinxes, griffins, hippocameleopards [*see* Monsters]—or by the structural complexity of a culture's hermeneutical principles, so that simple iconic images may have multiple interconnections with one another.

The antinomic character of animal symbols also makes them well adapted to mediating between realms

of other symbolic contrasts. Animals, as creatures freed from the constraints of human society, may have freedoms, powers, and abilities denied to humans; or, as manifestations of the divine essence of the universe in material form, they may be the linkage between the mundaneness of everyday life and the divinity underlying the cosmos.

Animal symbols often are used as expressions of abstract qualities of thought, feeling, and action or as manifestations of the processes of being and becoming. Thus, for example, eagles may represent insight and distance from the material world, snakes may represent autochthony, and spiders self-creation and orderedness. The tendency of Western scholars to ascribe to a particular animal symbol the meaning it has in Western culture is one of the fundamental errors of Western comparative theology. Such meanings are not universal but can only be derived from the totality of symbols of a particular culture. Fantastic animals may be used to represent the combination of several processes and their contradictions, as in the case of the centaur, for instance, which has the rationality of a man but the sociality of a beast. Although Western scholars frequently focus on the physical form of animals when interpreting the symbolic character of the animal, it is often the ecological status of an animal, and even more frequently, the nature of its movement, that forms the basis for animal symbolism, so that the animal's actions are seen as a microcosmic realization of a cosmic process. For example, among the Northwest Coast Indians, the image of a whale rising from the murky depths of the ocean into the light of the human world is an important symbol for any process that is emergent and imminent, whether it be birth, the power of the supernatural beings to enter the human domain, or the power by which insight illuminates the meaning of the world.

Even in cultures where animals are not sacred, they play an important role in carrying the weight of people's emotions and ideas. By virtue of their being animate, they form a domain that permits the easy projection of people's emotions and ideas onto them. Though much speculation surrounds the differences in religions between people who must kill animals to survive and people who herd them or merely keep them as pets, there may be little cross-cultural difference in the morphological, psychological, and symbolic structures that comprise human and animal relations.

The sacredness and power attributed to animals is balanced by images of domestication, control, and mundaneness. A dynamic tension exists within the paradox of the animal as controllable, helpless, subordinate to human needs and that of the animal that is outside the domain of society, tied into forces that control, domi-

nate, and domesticate humans. While such imagery has most often been pointed out in the rituals of hunting societies, it seems to be present in most, if not all, rituals regarding animals, no matter what the economic basis of the society. Many hunting societies further domesticate animals by imagining them to be humans wearing animal costumes, creatures who live by the same social rules and forms as *Homo sapiens*. This imagery of the human within the animal and the animal within the human is one of the most widespread in animal symbolism.

It cannot be overemphasized that the way in which we interpret animal symbolism is a reflection of the philosophy of symbolism that we espouse, of the theories we hold about the nature of human representation. As anthropologists have developed increasingly more subtle ideas about the way in which symbols operate in human cultures, they have been forced to revise their ideas about the course of human intellectual history. Unfortunately, the treatment of "primitive" religion in most comparative studies is still based on nineteenth-century ideas about the nature of primitive thought. [*See* Evolutionism.] In these theories, primitives were seen as beings incapable of the true perception of themselves, their fantasies, and the outside other and thus could not have a "true" religious awareness. The course of history was thus seen as a gradual progress from fantasy to rationality, and the key area in which such progress could be analyzed was in the progression from animal worship, through a number of stages, to the worship of an anthropomorphic but invisible deity. It was believed that the stages of increasing religious awareness could be mapped by the changing role of animals in religion. Such developmentalist ideas have been long disproved by ethnographic evidence, but they still remain in studies of the history of religion, and even among scholars who have rejected the major principles of developmentalism, many of the spurious facts and interpretations of these schemes remain unquestioned. Much of the picture of the history of world religion will have to be rewritten as ethnographic data and new approaches to semiotics force scholars to reanalyze the fundamental features of primitive—and civilized—religions.

In the developmentalist scheme, the earliest stages of religion involved human awareness of the other in the form of ideas of the soul. More advanced societies were thought to worship real (though nonhuman) beings rather than fantasies. The identification of the person with animals and the worship of animals were seen as important steps in human religious evolution. The word *totemism* was coined to refer to the general doctrine of symbolic association or even complete identification be-

tween humans and particular animal species, plants, or objects—especially the doctrine that a given species is the ancestor or protector spirit of an exogamous clan. [*See* Totemism.] Totemic beliefs were seen as the essential feature of primitive religions, and the evolution of religion away from primitivism could be measured by the pervasiveness of totemic belief in a society. Totemic beliefs in societies whose economies were not based on hunting and gathering were seen as survivals—either social or psychic—of the earlier stage of human mentality. Thus, the historians of religion paid especial attention to the presence of animal beliefs and cults, particularly in the Mediterranean, Nile, and Indus areas, since such cults were seen as an intermediate stage between complete identification with animals and the anthropomorphic religions of Western civilization.

The concept of totemism was expanded to include a wide variety of very diverse religious ideas and practices. Virtually any religious usage of animals or animal symbols was seen as an expression of totemic forms. Implicit in discussions of totemism was the idea that primitives were intellectually incapable of forming complex religious systems, that their understanding of the world was irrational, emotional, immature, informed by superstition rather than principles of moral science. Anthropologists have long argued that the apparent simplicity of primitive religions is primarily an artifact of the coarse analytic methods of researchers and of the inability of outsiders to capture the depth and complexity by which people in tribal societies are able to metaphorize themselves and their world. Furthermore, historians of religion, and indeed many anthropologists, are not always equipped to analyze and describe the complexities of psychological and philosophical beliefs of other cultures. It is all too easy to say that members of a totemic culture "identify" with an animal species, if one does not have to define the nature of the psychological and semiotic principles by which one defines the nature of identity.

In the most general sense, totemism is a facet of all cultures. The essence of totemism is to provide a symbolic domain that is clearly outside that of the social and to use the differences seen in that domain as representative of differences in social categories. In this way, totemic symbols come to stand for particular social groups, each particular species representing a different social category. Many symbolic domains besides animals can be used to express and categorize social differences, indirectly, and even where there are many animal symbols involved in totemic schemes, there are also many other domains that are intertwined with those animal symbols—astronomical, botanical, directional, body, color, and so on.

Frequently, animal symbols are used to express the idea of priorness, of originality, of the primordial state of the world. In all cultures, people realize the distinction between humans and nonhumans and play with the metaphors of human nature, with the images of moral and premoral. The world of animals, either as a place of wildness (as in the Western metaphorization) or as a place of inchoateness (as in American Indian religions) is seen as a world that is not under the constraints and limitations placed upon mankind. Animals are imagined to have extraordinary powers, insights, and abilities specifically because they are unfettered by the chains of human custom. Often animals are envisioned as morally pure, true to the principles of their place in the world, and incapable of acting immorally. Thus, ritual imitation of the animal places humans—who are motivated by desires and conflicts—into a state of freedom, enabling them to become part of the larger cosmic processes of which animals are the embodiment. Western scholars—members of cultures that emphasize aggression—have often erroneously noted that many times in primitive religion there is an identification of the person with a predatory animal. Historians of religion have not been careful in explaining what they mean by the idea of identification with an animal and often incorrectly assume that the primitive ritualist is seeing himself as equal or identical to the animal. Such an analytic error is indicative of the serious theoretical problems underlying our present approach to non-Western religions. In addition, many nonpredatory creatures are used in primitive rituals, but because they are not of interest to Western scholars, they are recorded only rarely. Contemporary anthropological analyses of tribal rituals clearly document the dramatic, literary, and representational nature of these ceremonies and show that the actors are well aware of the nature of portrayal and of the inconsistencies and contradictions found in the portrayals. They are cognizant of the fact that they are not animals but only represent them. Thus, a ritual that has a person pretending to be an animal only serves to reaffirm the essential distance between them. The research methods and psychological concepts of researchers have simply not been subtle enough to capture the nature of these rituals. Much of the supposed simplistic, emotional nature of the primitive is really an artifact of the simplistic, emotionally oriented psychological tenets of the researchers.

Among many of the hunting peoples of the world, there are rituals surrounding the killing of the prey. (These rituals share a number of superficial similarities that have led researchers to see them as historically interrelated, but there are substantial differences between them.) The contrast between the idea of the human liv-

ing in the cooperative social world and his leaving that world to enter the nonhuman world of hunting and killing is an important one and thus provides the occasion for a great deal of ritual action. It is not so much that hunting is difficult or even physically dangerous as that the hunter is going outside the bounds of society. Hunting rituals act to keep the hunter symbolically in a social state, creating a structure of action and emotion that the hunter takes with him—a moral and social structure that ensures that he will act correctly both when hunting and upon returning. Many of these rituals synthesize the image of the hunter and his prey, either through mimetic impersonation of the animal or verbal formulas. The imagery of such rituals emphasizes the necessity of cooperation between hunter and prey and affirms that this cooperation is an essential part of the correct moral order of the universe. When the correct moral and symbolic relationship has been created through the ritual process, the prey is believed to die willingly.

While many interpreters feel that rituals of hunting societies are categorically different from those in agricultural societies, there are critical similarities. In both cases, these rituals emphasize the necessity of order and cooperation, and many times hunting rituals speak not of killing but of nurturance and growth, as though the prey animal has to be taken care of like a herd of domestic animals or a crop. In both, there is an emphasis on regeneration and the cycle of rebirth and a recognition of the processes of the universe in the face of which man stands powerless. As social institutions, both types of ritual metaphorically describe and reaffirm the importance of labor and the customary division of labor in a society and by implication restate the fundamental social principles of each society. Hunting rituals serve to deemphasize the importance of the hunter and so forestall the carrying over of his aggression from its proper role of provisioning into human society. In emphasizing the covenant between hunter and prey, these rituals implicitly emphasize the covenant between hunters and society. Thus, hunting becomes no less domesticated a task than herding or horticulture—a means of domesticating both the forest world in which the prey lives and the social world in which the hunter lives.

The image of the hunter and of the hunt frequently is employed in agricultural societies as a metaphor for the wildness and immorality of the societies that preceded them. The freedom and passion of the hunter become symbols for those parts of society that are not constrained by social domination. For example, in the image of the royal hunt that is so prominent in the Neo-

lithic period is expressed the image of a government that is not constrained by the same rules as the governed. Symbolically, the king is represented as having the power to subdue and kill animals in the natural or wild world; thus, by implication, he has the authority to kill and subdue his enemies and his own subjects within his world. In such symbolic schemes, the members of a society become equivalent to the prey, their lives and their labor given to the man whose right to power comes from a different, divine source. The death of the lion becomes an image of the death, or subjugation, of his subjects, as well as an image of the bringing of moral order to the greater world outside that society through force. The image of sacrifice and self-sacrifice that is found in hunting rituals is equally prominent in the imagery of pastoral and agricultural societies.

The role of animal symbolism and rituals in Neolithic societies was of fundamental interest to the developmentalists, who saw the Neolithic as the first period of intellectual movement away from the emotionally charged superstitions of the hunter through the gradual acceptance of ritual forms and ideas that were intermediate to those of the anthropocentric ideas of Judaism and Christianity. Animal cults were explained either as survivals of the irrational emotions and symbols of man's hunting heritage, as atavisms, or as half-formed attempts to express true moral religion. Since rationality was assumed to be present only in civilized man, such animal cults were seen as expressions of the gradual alienation of the animal component from human self-definition. Religions were placed on an evolutionary scale according to how closely they resembled Christianity. Cults were dated according to the extent that they shared ideas with Christianity, and spurious cults were imagined to explain gaps in the "historic" record. Unfortunately, many of these spurious cults have now become part of the record of the history of religions. Even those cults that did exist have been interpreted within the limited hermeneutical and psychological schemes that historians of religion apply to non-Western religions. Hence the careful scholar must look very skeptically at the record of animal beliefs in pre-Christian societies.

The philosophical ideas and ritual actions of these Neolithic cults have not been well analyzed. Some historians of religion are interested in the diffusion of images and practices, isolated from their context in each particular religion, rather than deep analysis of particular religions. An animal is seen as having the same symbolic identity and meaning in whatever ritual context it appears. Anthropologists have long criticized this approach, arguing both that the role of a symbol

changes according to the context in which it occurs and that conventional Western symbolic values cannot be extrapolated onto other cultures. Furthermore, Western scholars concentrate on animals that carry heavy symbolic weight in Western cultures—bears, wolves, horses, bulls—and often ignore other species that are classified as vermin in their own cultures but that have symbolic importance to members of other cultures. Psychohistorians argue that animals are used to symbolize essential emotional and intellectual characteristics of human beings, both those that are universal and those specific to particular times and places. In their view, there is not so much diffusion and borrowing of symbolic elements as there is a continual re-creation and reexpression of fundamental ideas in similar ways, perhaps independent of the historic context.

Structural approaches to symbolism have argued that the symbolic domains of a culture are an intertwined set of contrasts, oppositions, congruencies, and equivalences. The entire symbolic system of a culture may be seen as a set of equations in which the juxtaposition of two given symbols implies another symbol—a system in which there is a continual dialectic process of opposition and synthesis. Taken from this viewpoint, the animal cults of the Neolithic era may be seen as expressing a number of important philosophical and social ideas in symbolic form. Such a viewpoint has important ramifications for our understanding of these religions, for it argues that Neolithic man is not "worshiping" (a highly ethnocentric term with little validity in comparative religious history) the animal represented in and of itself but is worshiping the implied principle or being that results when man and animal are brought together in the correct ritual context. In the simplest equation, the individual animal symbolizes the social unity of the congregants. Often, animals selected for these cults are domesticated rather than wild and symbolize the domestication of humans by society. The image of the animal that is secularly under the control of humans as a deity under whose control humans now live is one of the most common images of animal cults. Animals that live on the fringes of human settlements or possess "human" behaviors or characteristics that cut across semantic categories mediate between the human world and the larger universe. Frequently, the animal acts as the reification, the tangible form, of an abstract process, idea, attribute, or divine being.

Many of the fantastic creatures found in every culture's lexicon of beings can be seen as representations of philosophical syntheses, depicting the relationship of human, animal, and deity as a unity, a philosophical conundrum. Such creatures link together different and

discrete cosmic levels and may imply, rather than represent, the deity whose identity is emergent in the physical form of the creature. Religious groups, in the process of institutionalizing their dogmas, often invent images of fantastic creatures and demons that set off and oppose their own ideas of the nature of the divine figure. Although such a phenomenon is easiest to observe in the growth of demonology in the medieval Christian church with its written records, it seems to be a widespread part of religious process in general. These images are often inversions of social forms of that society, as in the imagining of witches as women who have the freedom to leave the sphere of domesticity and male domination, and the worship of these creatures is frequently spuriously ascribed to earlier, less moral societies. Plato, for example, contrasted the rational, anthropocentric religions of urban Athens with a supposed cult of lycanthropy in the wilds of Arcadia. In his account, not only were the Arcadians worshipers of the wolf, but their human forms were not even complete, and they could change themselves into wolves. The works of other travelers and historians—from Herodotus to the present—contain many other examples of such imaginary cults. Though anthropologists have frequently documented the processes by which religions define themselves implicitly by imagining their opposites and have argued that ideas of monsters, fantastic creatures, and demons must be seen as productions or inventions of the culture itself and not of the outsiders to whom the idea is attributed, the literature of the history of religions takes many of these purported cults at face value.

It is important to remember that, as core symbols, animals simultaneously represent many different, and sometimes contradictory, ideas and that all religions possess complex cosmologies in which symbols change their meanings at different cosmological levels. To choose only one case, for example, a widespread image is that of the Rainbow (or Feathered) Serpent, a being associated with water, whose wavelike motions are parallel to those of a serpent. Though associated both with standing water and rain (images of stasis and process), the Rainbow Serpent is also associated with storms as a whole and thus with the lightning and wind that accompany storms. The association with lightning ties into an association with fire, and thus with heat and dryness. Though able to fly, as a cloud does, the Rainbow Serpent is associated with the earth, onto which the rain falls. Although it is a representation of the forces outside human society, it also represents the heat of passion and the tears of sorrow. An image of rebirth, it is also an image of death. Those Western scholars for

whom there is a strong belief that a symbol has only a single, true meaning often fail to perceive the ways in which symbols are used simultaneously to express and intertwine many different levels of experience and understanding.

The ambiguity and multivalence of animals is most evident in the widespread occurence in world mythology of trickster figures. Most trickster figures are identified as animals, but with the ability to transform themselves into humans. Though animals, tricksters are overwhelmingly possessed by human desires and emotions and exhibit behaviors that would be crude or immoral in the human social world. [See Tricksters.] In the act of trying to satisfy their overwhelming passions, trickster figures accidentally create the features and laws of the present social world. The imagery of the trickster tales is that of a being who transcends the boundaries of correct behavior but who is continually put into his proper place by the communal actions of others. He is at once creator and destroyer, giver and negator, he who dupes others and is himself duped, an image of instinctual living ungoverned by morality, a representation of the whims, vagaries, and contrasts of the universe and its inhabitants. In scholarly analyses of myths, trickster figures are often contrasted to heroes, but both tricksters and heroes transcend the boundaries of social propriety and have to be controlled. Both are figures of excess, of uncontrollable passion, mediating between the world of pure essence and the world of human desires.

In general, animal symbols manifest the same essential features and functions as do trickster symbols, being both metonym and metaphor, participating to some degree in the reality of the world yet abstracted from it, governed by forces beyond their control yet creative in their own right, essentially human yet decidedly outside humanity, mundane yet enmeshed with the deepest, most transcendent, most sacred aspects of human experience and awareness. Animals, existing like humans but outside of society, encapsulate the ultimate values and contradictions of human identity, demonstrating what humans—could they be freed from the limitations of their being—have the potential to become.

[Myths about animals are discussed in various entries under the heading Mythic Themes. See also entries on specific animals: Bears; Birds; Cats; Elephants; Fish; Horses; Lions; Rabbits; Snakes; and others.]

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ANIMISM AND ANIMATISM. The term *animism* properly refers to a theory set forth by the English scholar E. B. Tylor (1832–1917), one of the founders of modern anthropology, in order to account for the origin and development of religion. Tylor's theory was in general harmony with the dominant evolutionistic views of his age, as represented by the naturalist Charles Robert Darwin (1809–1882) and the social philosopher Herbert Spencer (1820–1903). Darwin and Spencer both viewed the development of the natural and social world as a movement from lower to higher forms, from the simple to the complex. [See Evolutionism.]

The distinctiveness of Tylor's theory was its assumption that the earliest form of religion was characterized by man's ideas concerning a plurality of spirits and ghosts. In this he differed from Spencer, who had posited atheism at the beginning of human culture, although both followed the common pattern of their evolutionistic contemporaries in deriving a most archaic form of religion from man's rational reflections on the world of nature and on himself.

Inevitably, each theory of the most archaic form of religion led to speculations on still earlier stages or other hypothetical beginnings. One supposed earlier stage that was widely accepted among scholars was linked to the name of R. R. Marett (1866–1943), best known for his The Threshold of Religion (1909). Marett, who first launched his own theory in 1900, saw it as an extension of Tylor's and for that reason spoke of preanimism, or animatism. This hypothetical earliest stage of "prereligion" was also known as dynamism, a term introduced by the French anthropologist Arnold van Gennep in his Les rites de passage (1909). The term *dynamism* (from the Greek *dunamis*, "power, energy") suggests the presence of a power that is not, or is not necessarily, individualized. [See Dynamism.] It is still somehow homogeneous, not yet differentiated as it is in

the stage of animism. Marett himself made the comparison with electricity. His term *animatism*, like *dynamism*, points to a thing, situation, or state of affairs that is enlivened or animated, but not in any individual, soul-like manner.

The theories of animism and animatism are difficult to take seriously in our own time, given the psychological sophistication that has come to be taken for granted in intellectual circles since Freud. Assuredly, Tylor's theory of successive stages and the production of ever higher religious forms by the human mind is far too unwieldy to account for the phenomena history offers. As early as 1887, sixteen years after Tylor published his influential work *Primitive Culture*, the Dutch historian of religions P. D. Chantepie de la Saussaye expressed his reservations in his famous *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*. He grouped Tylor together with other evolutionists who, in his opinion, tried too hard to apply a mechanical worldview to historical, social, cultural, and religious facts. However, even though Chantepie de la Saussaye found support for his criticism in F. Max Müller, the famous Indologist and historian of religions, and in the philosophies of the German thinkers Eduard von Hartmann (1842–1906) and R. H. Lotze (1817–1881), he was far from rejecting the theory of animism altogether. The influence of Tylor and the other evolutionists pervaded the age.

At the present time one might feel inclined to dismiss the subjects of animism and animatism as irrelevant for scholarship, were it not for three considerations. In the first place, Tylor's theory in particular has had a firm hold on scholarship for some seventy or eighty years and still turns up in some circles today as if it were authoritative. Second, animism can be seen as a twentieth-century name given to a type of theory that has been influential throughout the history of intellectual dealings with religion. Third, animism, with its progeny, illustrates in a clear fashion the nineteenth-century obsession with origins, and this subject falls squarely within the interest of the history of religions, for in the final analysis the obsession with origins of ultimate human orientations is itself a religious phenomenon.

The Theory, Its Impact, and Its Inadequacies. Turning to the first of the three reasons why animism is still worthy of our attention, we should look more closely at the theory Tylor developed. The theory owed not a little of its appeal to Tylor's superb style of writing. He reflected on the diverse mass of ethnological data that reached his desk, tried to account for it by imagining what might have happened in the minds of early man, and presented his findings in vivid colors in perfect harmony with the prevailing ideas and sentiments of his time.

The "noble savage," unspoiled by education, had been popularized by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and the image of the child's growth was invoked by Lessing in his *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts* (1780) to explain the historical development or "education" of the human race. In Tylor's *Primitive Culture* (1871), however, the poetic simile was presented as science. Tylor argued for a strict, scientific analogy between primitive man and the child and its mentality. His formulation gave the analogy new force, as if it could be relied on as an established fact, and it would be taken up again several decades later by the French philosopher Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (1857–1939) and the Dutch phenomenologist Gerardus van der Leeuw (1890–1959).

Tylor's evolutionism did not lose touch with all religious sentiment, however. Tylor was a Quaker, and in the spirit of his age he associated the evolution of man with the natural process of growth and with a general increase in human understanding and responsibility. The English anthropologist E. E. Evans-Pritchard has suggested that a good many of the anthropologists who theorized on "primitive religion," from the latter half of the nineteenth century to the present, were really preparing a means to attack Christianity, while they despised the primitive religions they studied as a mass of illusions. Such an assessment of Tylor would be unfair. Tylor's evolutionism was in fact more akin to that of Nathan Söderblom (1866–1931), the Swedish Lutheran archbishop and historian of religions, who saw Christianity as the most perfect image of the goal toward which all religous evolution headed. Together with this essentially religious, apologetic motive, however, Tylor's view of primitives also shared something of the vision of Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936), the English poet laureate who celebrated the British empire's responsibility to "carry the white man's burden" and lead the way for the savages, even when the latter failed to understand the nobility of that task or went so far as to rebel against their benefactors. This side of Tylor's theory of evolution shows it to be the product of British imperialism and colonialism. Both elements, the religious tenor and the nationalism, intermingle in Tylor's work.

Tylor proposed the term *animism* for the study of "the deep-lying doctrine of Spiritual Beings, which embodies the very essence of Spiritualistic as opposed to Materialistic philosophy." He called his concept a minimum definition of religion. He would have preferred the term "spiritualism" for his theory if that term had not come into use (especially in his day) to designate groups with extreme views on supernatural phenomena. It is not unfair to say that Tylor's interest in "ghosts" and "souls," in spite of its outstanding quality and distinctiveness, is

still part of the intellectual fashions of his time, a time in which the most famous ghost story of all Western literary history, Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* (first published in 1843), attained an unprecedented success.

Tylor was fascinated with the reflections that he believed to be fundamental to early man, whom he believed to be represented by the "savages" of the present. These reflections, he thought, arose from the experience of death and dying, and from dreams and dreaming. What happens when life leaves a body? Where does one's life, one's dying breath, go? The primitive observed what happened and refused to accept death as final. Moreover, in a dream one would see the deceased alive, moving, speaking. For the primitive, the dream-world would not be less real than the waking state. In reflections such as these on the spirits of the dead and the ghosts perceived in dreams, Tylor saw the first forms of a religious signature. [*See also* Ghosts.]

Tylor did not at all plan his work as a work of speculation. On the contrary, he did his utmost to be fair to all evidence. Although the experiences of death and dreams seemed to explain many ideas among tribal peoples, he recognized the existence of traditions concerning a great many other "spirits," especially spirits of nature, of woods, lakes, and so on. The spirits of the dead, nevertheless, remained for Tylor the earliest phenomena that could have triggered man's mind in the formation of religion. [*See* Demons.]

Spirits could take on a truly independent existence, according to his theory, and the manifold traditions from all over the world confirmed it. Nothing seemed more natural than the slow development from low to high, from a plurality of spirits on to a polytheistic system, a hierarchy among nature spirits, and ultimately some form of monotheism. Some elements in his scheme of development had had their predecessors, as in the ideas of the philosopher David Hume (1711–1776) concerning the gradual development of religion leading from polytheism toward monotheism, but the mass of evidence drawn from history and from among contemporary tribal traditions gave Tylor's theory the impressive scientific persuasiveness that a more empirically inclined age desired.

The same tendencies that raised Zeus to his supreme place among the Olympians and elevated the Indian deity Brahmā above the rank of mighty nature spirits are visible according to Tylor in the formation of the Great Spirit among North American Indians and have further analogies in the processes at work among the tribesmen on the Chota Nagpur plateau of India, as well as among the peoples of Ethiopia. In general, developments taking place on the "lower level of mythic religion" are confirmed in higher, more intellectual traditions, such

as those of Greece and China, and are finally reinforced by the spread of Christianity. It then becomes the ongoing task of systematic theology to develop and define the figure of the supreme deity, whether he is called the God of Heaven, the Sun, or the Great Spirit.

This final building block in Tylor's theory is not a mere ornament but the finishing touch to an architectonic system. Tylor was quite consciously trying to give substance to the traditional, formal Christian-theological concept of natural religion. He called the theory of the soul "one principal part of a system of religious philosophy which unites, in an unbroken line of mental connexion, the savage fetish-worshipper and the civilized Christian."

The completeness of Tylor's theory should not be allowed to conceal a certain ambiguity in its details, however, an ambiguity that is more a characteristic of the scholarship of his time than a personal weakness. Although he wished to show that primitive religion was rational, that it arose from unmistakable observations, nevertheless he judged these observations to be inadequate in themselves. Although logical deductions were drawn from these observations, he believed these deductions were faulty. And although the "savages" managed to construct a natural philosophy, as a philosophy it remained crude. Tylor thus stressed the rational element in primitive religion and at the same time referred to that religion as "this farrago of nonsense." The classification necessary to science was basic to it, yet it went wrong when the magician mistakenly inferred that things that are like have a mystical link between them, thereby mistaking an ideal connection for a real one, a subjective one for an objective one (Evans-Pritchard).

Since the middle of the twentieth century our knowledge of prehistory has increased so much as to make one objection to Tylor's theory evident at once: his theory of "animism" as the original form of religion has not found any historical confirmation. Moreover, the key ingredients of his theory are limited to hypothetical considerations ascribed to the mind of very distant, primordial men, and the chances that those men used the same sort of logic or lived in circumstances calling for positivistic concerns of the sort that Tylor took for granted are remote. At present, prehistorians, historians, and anthropologists would agree that Tylor's theory has very little bearing on anything they would consider a religious phenomenon.

In the history of scholarship, among the first objections raised against Tylor's animism were those that appealed to a theory of preanimism or dynamism. However, as already noted, Marett, who was the first to speak of preanimism (in 1900), thought not of rejecting

but rather of extending Tylor's reasoning, and of making a space for a stage in which ideas concerning a life-force had not yet been differentiated into the notion of independent spirits. Marett actually goes so far as to compare the supposed impersonal power with electricity. The comparison is characteristic of the times and had great appeal when some big cities, such as New York, had begun to look like forests of poles for electrical wiring. The idea of a mysterious force, alive and yet homogeneous, not yet individualized, was at once popular. [*See* Preanimism.] The same objections that can be raised against animism can be raised against preanimism as well. Both theories attribute a modern, mechanical, and positivistic concern to early man. Nor has historical evidence for dynamism as the origin of religion been forthcoming. Marett's theory leaned in part on work done by R. H. Codrington in the Pacific (*The Melanesians*, 1895). The key conception was *mana*, a Melanesian idea that in Marett's opinion could be identified with notions of other "primitives" (such as *wakan* among the Lakota, *orenda* among the Iroquois, *manitou* among the Algonquin). It seemed as if *mana* could provide an improved, even an adequate minimum definition of religion, namely, "supernatural power." Other scholars extended Marett's line of reasoning and found traces of the same original conception in the *brahman* of the Hindus and in both the *numen* and the *imperium* of the Romans. [*See* Numen.]

Anthropologists have since pointed out, however, that even in Codrington's descriptions, *mana* cannot often be properly interpreted as "impersonal power." The term occurs as a rule in a far more complex context, as do words such as "the sacred" or "magic" with ourselves. Moreover, even when the term *mana* conveys the notion "power," it is always the power of a spirit or some other agent; hence Marett's insistence on its impersonal character is not convincing. In addition, it is now known that notions of an "impersonal power" do not occur among peoples that are culturally least advanced and who would represent a truly "primitive" stage in an evolutionary process. Contrary to what the theory would require, they do not occur among the most archaic gatherers and hunters but rather in much more developed societies such as those on the cultural level of nomadic cattle breeders with intricate patriarchal kinship systems. [*See* Power.]

The main objection against the sort of preanimistic theory designed by Marett, as in the case of Tylor's animism, remains philosophical in nature. The theories of animism and preanimism suffer from the problem of reading our mental assumptions into the data without sufficient critical analysis. Marett's formula of a "supernatural power" as a minimum definition of religion is

eloquent. The adjective *supernatural*, which has dominated the anthropological vocabulary for a long time in endeavors to delineate religion, implies a natural world that is known, on top of which the unknown or rather the not-yet-known or perhaps altogether illusory dimension elevates itself. The real quality of this unknown or illusory upper story escapes not so much our mind as that of "the primitives." Hence the latter create for themselves strange conceptions and thereby indulge in a strange ("childish") habit from which the investigator is free. [*See* Supernatural, The.]

Animism and preanimism are both concepts to which the rule formulated by the philosopher Henri Bergson (in 1903) fully applies: concepts, especially if they are simple, have the disadvantage of being in reality symbols for the object they symbolize and demand no effort on our part. The very concept of "the primitives" is itself an abstraction for an enormous, variegated group of human traditions. The theories make them into an object and single out the idea of "spirits" or "power" to suggest an even more concise concept. In the process the illusion that the people studied and the modern investigator represent two altogether different groups of mankind (an illusion that always lurks in the background in humanistic and social studies) threatens to become permanent. Such a dichotomy was generally considered valid throughout the period of colonization by Western nations during which Tylor and Marett did their work. The attitude that was then prevalent explains how for several generations, in the best of intellectual circles, the term *animist* became a synonym for what a former age would have called "pagan." The term had the advantage of a certain scientific ring. Thus, in missionary surveys and elsewhere one can occasionally still read, for instance, that Burma's population consists mainly of Buddhists, Muslims, and Animists. Tylor's theory has had such an impact as to suggest that animism is in fact a religion, whereas in fact it was never more than a theory about religion. One cannot reproach Tylor for this popular revamping of his ideas, and yet the philosophical assumptions of the theory carried this potential danger with them.

Animism in the History of Scholarship. As a theory in religion, Tylor's animism does not stand in total isolation, in spite of its splendor, influence, and popularity. Ideas concerning a creative human imagination conjuring up superhuman figures are ancient. Of special relevance is the idea of the dead as the nucleus around which a world of spiritual beings could have been built up. The name of the Greek Euhemerus (third century BCE) is inseparable from the theory that bears his name, "euhemerism." According to this theory, the gods were originally no more than human rulers who were later

elevated to the status of gods by subsequent generations because of the benefits they bestowed on mankind. The theory endured well into the eighteenth century, yet Augustine of Hippo and other early Christian thinkers, who were quite familiar with it in its classical form, gave it a new twist. In Christian thought a distinction unknown to Classical Greece was made between true and false religion. Thus whereas formerly the gods owed their divinity to the benefits they had bestowed on man, now the idea was introduced that their superhuman state was the result of their stupendous vices and evil deeds; not their radiant kingship, but their mere humanity came to be emphasized; not veneration, but fear was the proper human response to their acts, not adoration, but propitiation. They were demonic rather than divine. This new interpretation of euhemerism agreed very well with another pre-Christian idea, as expressed by the Roman author Statius (c. 40–96 CE): "Primus in orbe deos fecit timor" ("The first reason in the world for the existence of the gods was fear").

Neither in antiquity nor in the Middle Ages did anyone posit human reflection on death or any other single idea as the cause of religion. Such a theoretical attempt to find a single principle at the origin of religion did not really occur until the end of the eighteenth century, and full-fledged reductionistic theories were not developed until the nineteenth century. However, with regard to our topic, two eighteenth-century names stand out. David Hume's *The Natural History of Religion* (1757) can be read as a prelude to nineteenth-century evolutionistic schemes of religion. Hume posited a plurality of gods at the beginning of man's religious history and a monotheistic system at its culmination. The other name is that of the French magistrate and Enlightenment scholar Charles de Brosses (1709–1777). De Brosses is of interest not only for his idea of an evolving religiousness but also for notions that resemble Tylor's animism and Marett's preanimism. In 1757 de Brosses wrote an essay, *Du culte des dieux fétiches* (The Cult of the Fetish Gods), that dealt with the similarity between the religion of ancient Egypt and that of contemporary sub-Saharan Africa. The Académie des Inscriptions, to which de Brosses had submitted his work, considered it too daring and published it only anonymously in 1760. Most remarkably, de Brosses used the term *fetishism* in a very wide sense, to describe the original common form of all religion, and precisely this comprehensiveness makes it resemble Tylor's animism.

Fetishism in de Brosses's vocabulary included the cult of animals and plants as well as inanimate objects. This first crude form of religion would have been uniform in man's earliest state of existence, again like Tylor's animism. Evolutionist *avant la date*, the French-

man posited the idea of a subsequent development of the human mind by degrees "from the lower to the higher." Unlike his fellow *philosophes*, who in their zeal sought to show a purely natural religion at the root of all later development, de Brosses pointed to idols in ancient Egypt that were partially formed in the shape of animals. Ahead of his time in this respect, he was actually guided more than his contemporaries by empirical evidence. Evidence showed that the origin of religion could only be found in savage expressions, and that is precisely what his "fetishism" tried to explain. (The word *fetish* was borrowed from the Portuguese for "amulet" or "charm." [See Fetishism.]) That the intellectual climate of the nineteenth century was indeed affected by the work of de Brosses is clear from the fact that Auguste Comte, the principal philosopher of positivism, in developing his "law of the three states" through which mankind supposedly passed—the "theological," the "metaphysical," and the "positive"—drew on him to articulate the first (theological) state. Through Comte, de Brosses thus became a source for the socioreligious evolutionism of the century of Darwin and Tylor.

Even when all "influences" and all earlier ideas concerning worship of the dead are listed, however, we have still not fully explained the origin of the complete evolutionistic systems of the nineteenth century. This point must be emphasized especially with respect to euhemerism, for contrary to widely held scholarly opinion, the explanatory intent of euhemeristic ideas before the eighteenth century was quite limited. Early euhemerism, although speaking of gods as originally human beings, was primarily a narrative device that allowed people like Snorri Sturluson (1178–1241), the Icelandic scholar, to weave together biblical accounts, the Homeric story about Troy, and traditions concerning the gods of the ancient pagan North.

By contrast, the theories of Tylor, and likewise those of Herbert Spencer, did not merely combine, arrange, or rearrange myths but posited a causal explanation for the phenomenon of religion in general. Thus theories concerning "the dead" as a factor in the formation of religion, although most clearly originating with euhemerism, may be clearly divided into three very different groups: (1) a first group illustrated by Euhemerus himself, who was a narrator, a "novelist," and who told a story concerning the gratitude of people to royal benefactors who came to be adored and thereby lifted onto a celestial plane (notably, in Euhemerus's story, Kronos, Ouranos, and Zeus); (2) Augustine and all other early Christian theologians, who did not regard the pagan gods as nonexistent but made use of euhemeristic ideas to explain them as mere human beings who had

become demonic in character and were remembered and placated because of their evil deeds; and (3) the theories of Tylor and Spencer, positing one principal cause for the development of religion and finding that cause located primarily in man's rational reflections concerning the departed souls.

Animism and the Obsession with Origins. The distance that separates us from "typical" nineteenth-century views allows us to perceive the peculiar fascination with origins that then dominated scholarship, not merely in the study of life forms (in the famous work of Darwin), but especially in the social, historical, and religious studies of the time. Theories about the primal form of religion abounded. Atheism and ancestor worship (Spencer), preanimism (Marett), totemism (employed by the sociologist Émile Durkheim, 1858–1917, the Old Testament scholar W. Robertson Smith, 1846–1894, and others), a first parricide (Sigmund Freud, 1856–1939), a primal monotheism (the ethnologist Wilhelm Schmidt, 1868–1954), magic (the English folklorist and classicist James G. Frazer, 1845–1941)—all vied with animism. All aimed to provide the best explanation for the origins of religion.

It is true that more recent times have added to the list of supposed "causes"; particularly influential has been the idea that religion originated in the use of intoxicants, which as a subject demanded attention in the wake of medical and pharmaceutical studies and an increase in the use of drugs in and since the 1950s. However, these more recent speculations have not seriously engaged historians and anthropologists. The striking feature of the earlier theories is precisely that reputable scholars did take them seriously and, as in the case of animism, came to rely on them as on a well-established law.

The generally shared worldview that encouraged such lines of inquiry requires special attention. It was a commonly and uncritically held assumption during the nineteenth century that knowledge concerning the origin of something was the only essential knowledge of it. This preoccupation with the knowledge of origins can be explained in various ways; it can itself be shown to have had several different historical origins. The tradition in the history of philosophy that led to Hegel, and through him to most of the nineteenth century, was certainly the most powerful. The wave of philosophical materialism, multifarious as it was, was also of great significance and explains the overwhelming interest in the mechanisms of causality operative in biology, society, and religion. From the point of view of the historian of religions, however, a specifically religious structure can be detected in the nineteenth-century fascination with origins, a structure that was no less evident in evo-

lutionistic scholars who thought of themselves as "areligious" or "antireligious" than it was in consciously religious adherents.

The most easily traceable roots of the nineteenth-century obsession with origins, viewed as a peculiarly religious structure, can be found in the first period of modern history, which saw the beginnings of all modern scientific inquiry. The famous Renaissance thinkers Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499) and Giordano Bruno (1548–1600) were not at all exceptional in their time in regarding the newly rediscovered Hermetic writings as some sort of primordial revelation (Frances A. Yates, Mircea Eliade). Ancient Egypt, to which their origin was (erroneously) attributed, was traditionally considered to be the cradle of everything truly archaic (a tradition already attested in the Greek historian Herodotus in the sixth century BCE). Renaissance men of the most diverse backgrounds were convinced of the extraordinary significance of these supposedly pre-Mosaic Hermetic writings. This odd enthusiasm, though explicable to some extent by the ignorance of the true history of the Hermetic corpus, can also be understood as an urge to find true origins beyond any limited and known tradition.

The function of the Hermetic writings among the learned in the Renaissance can be compared to the function of cosmogonic myths in all archaic religious traditions (Eliade). [See Cosmogony.] They provided a manner of positing an irrefutable, unshakable reality, a primordial revelation, first in time and significance. The mysterious quality of the meaning of the Hermetic writings was not a drawback but rather an enhancement. Giordano Bruno was certain that his understanding of their real meaning allowed him to grasp the significance of Corpernicus's discoveries better than Copernicus himself, because he saw that the primordial revelation, obscure to many, was here confirmed.

Doubts concerning the truth of Christianity, and certainly concerning its traditionally conceived truths, had their place in the intellectual climate of the Renaissance. Nor were similar doubts at all hard to find in the nineteenth century, even if we recognize that in Tylor, more than in most of his fellow evolutionists, a religious motivation played its part. In a perfectly sober survey of the great figures of anthropology and the history of religions, including Tylor, Marett, Lang, Frazer, and Robertson Smith, it is easy to detect an attitude that came to view religion as a lost cause (David Bidney). However, the climate of erudition and science that developed in the nineteenth century also provided a new sense of an "ultimate reality" or, at the very least, a dependable epistemological framework within which all religious phenomena could be placed, each with its lim-

ited value and historical limitations. It is true that this "ultimate reality" turned out to be very limited in its turn, but it is also true that even at the time of Tylor and Marett, and all their fellow scholars, the "ultimate" concern for origins and evolution demanded constant exegesis, exactly as did the Hermetic corpus in the Renaissance, which thereby did not undermine its value, but confirmed it.

The principal epistemological problem of Tylor's evolutionism, as well as other cultural and religious evolutionisms (as in the circles of the Religionsgeschichtliche Schule, centered in Germany) was not that it did not recognize its own religious structure, for such recognition as a rule does not occur until the following generation. Rather, the principal problem was that the object of study, the religious traditions of mankind, was mutilated by reducing it to an object on a dissecting table. In the process every religious structure evaporated. The knowledge of religion as basically "animistic" or "preanimistic" is knowledge as power, but this power is destructive. A tradition that is understood reveals itself as a movement in which one generation can pass on its "power" over life and human orientation to the next, as something that gives life. The weakness of animism and related theoretical constructs is the weakness visible in all "emaciation in learning and science" (van der Leeuw) resulting from an unjustifiable objectification. The evolutionisms, of which Tylor's became the most popular and influential, in the end failed epistemologically, in a way analogous to the political failure of the empires in which they were born, and to which they were related.

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KEES W. BOLLE

ANINGAAQ. The Inuit (Eskimo) most often referred to the Moon as Aningaaq, a name derived from *ani* ("her elder brother"). According to a widespread myth, the Moon was once a man who made love to his sister without her knowing his identity. After having marked him with soot in the dark, she discovered that they had committed incest, and she fled from the house, bringing some light with her. Her brother followed her, but his torch went out. They rose to the sky, where the brother, as the Moon, still pursues his sister, the Sun.

While the Sun did not play any significant role in Inuit religion, the Moon was a prominent figure, representing the male principle in the world. He affected the fertility of women, and boys who had ambitions to become great hunters would address him. The Moon was a great hunter himself and sometimes supplied the dead in the sky with sea animals. His game animals—for example, white whales—were marked with black spots, and a hunter who happened to kill one of the Moon's animals was punished.

Most influence was attributed to him in Alaska, especially in the Norton Sound and lower Yukon area. People there believed the Moon controlled the animals, and the shamans visited him in order to obtain animals for their settlements. For the Inuit in both Canada and Greenland, Sedna, the goddess of the sea, was more important; but whereas the Inuit in Canada considered the Moon a benefactor to mankind, those in Greenland feared him because he might punish transgressions of taboos.

When the shamans and the ordinary people of Canada and Greenland visited the Moon in the sky, they had to beware of a female spirit who would slit their bellies open and tear out their entrails if she managed to make them laugh. This disemboweler was called Erlaveersisoq ("the one who removes entrails") in Greenland and was known as Ululiarnaaq ("the one with a woman's knife") in eastern Canada.

[*See also* Inuit Religion.]

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INGE KLEIVAN

ANNWN. The Celtic otherworld is known in Welsh as *Annwn* or *Annwfn*, variously analyzed as connoting "nonworld," "within-world," or "very deep." There is no formal description of this world in Welsh, and allusions in medieval Welsh texts and folklore suggest that it had many aspects. Its identification in medieval times with Hell and in modern folklore with fairyland is, of course, secondary. It is sometimes located below ground and is entered by subterranean tunnels, or it may be below the waters of a lake. Both concepts occur in medieval texts and in recent folk tales. In the "Four Branches" of the *Mabinogi* (c. 1060–1120), the medieval Welsh collection of mythological tales, Annwn is conceived of as a world adjacent to the natural world, between which there are no boundaries but an awareness of a new dimension. Thus the hero Pwyll travels from his own land of Dyfed in southwestern Wales to Annwn along roads which should logically have been familiar to him. In other cases the act of sitting upon a mound or hill opens the way to traffic from one world to the other.

Two poems in the thirteenth-century *Book of Taliesin* portray Annwn, although not under that name, as an island. One of these, the so-called *Spoils of Annwfn*, refers to an attack on the otherworld by Arthur from which only seven of his retinue return and uses a variety of names for the otherworld, probably indicating different aspects—for example, Caer ("fortress"), Sidi (perhaps from the Irish *sídh*, "mound"), Caer Feddwid (perhaps "drunkenness"), and Caer Wydr ("glass"). This last name recalls an account in the ninth-century *Historia Brittonum* said to have been written by one Nennius, which tells of an attack by sea upon a glass tower. Since both texts refer to silent sentinels, it may be assumed that the otherworld is the land of the dead. It is never viewed as a land of torment, however. The other poem in the *Book of Taliesin* describes it as being free of sickness and old age and flowing with wine.

In the Second Branch of the *Mabinogi*, the timeless world of forgetful bliss underlies the feasts and sojourn of Brân's followers at Harlech and the island of Gwales, and this motif is common in modern folk tales. [*See* Mabinogion.] The birds of Rhiannon, whose song heard over the water lulls the living to sleep, are doubtless from this otherworld. Annwn has its own kingdoms, and its rulers may call upon mortals to aid them, as Arawn, king of Annwn, summons Pwyll in the First Branch. Most commonly Gwynn ap Nudd, not Arawn, is known as king of the otherworld. He has this role in the eleventh-century story *Culhwch and Olwen* and in the sixteenth-century *Life of Saint Collen*. In modern folklore he is king of the fairies, but he has a more sinister role as leader of the Wild Hunt, the hounds of which are known as Cwn Annwn ("dogs of Annwn").

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BRYNLEY F. ROBERTS

ANSELM (c. 1033–1109), Benedictine theologian, doctor of the church, archbishop of Canterbury, and Christian saint. Anselm is best known for an ontological argument for the existence of God that is still debated and for his opposition to the English kings William Rufus (William II) and Henry I on matters of ecclesiastical rights.

Born of a wealthy Lombard family in the Alpine village of Aosta in Piedmont, northern Italy, Anselm received his earliest education first from a relative and then from the local Benedictines. After the death of his mother in 1056, he gave up his patrimony and crossed the Alps with a companion in search of learning. In 1059 he made his way to the Benedictine abbey of Bec in Normandy (founded around 1039 by the abbot Herluin), where the learned and famous Lanfranc, a fellow Lombard from Pavia, taught. During the following year, at the age of twenty-seven, Anselm was persuaded to enter the abbey and begin a life of intense prayer and study. Three years later, when Lanfranc was chosen to be abbot of Saint Stephen's in Caen, Anselm succeeded him as prior and teacher. On the death of Herluin in August 1078, the community pleaded with Anselm to become their abbot, and he was consecrated in 1079. Within his first year as abbot he visited England on business for the monastery and took time to visit Lanfranc, who had been induced by William the Conqueror to accept the archbishopric of Canterbury in 1070. About the year 1070, when he was thirty-seven years old, Anselm began his writing career. Most of his works were begun, and almost all of them were published, at the request of his monks as an aid to understanding and defending the teachings of faith or expressing devotion.

When Lanfranc died in May 1089, the new king William Rufus refused to name a successor, claiming all revenues of Canterbury and other monasteries for his military campaigns. William eventually consented to appoint Anselm, who reluctantly was invested as abbot by the king on 6 March 1093 and consecrated bishop on 5 December. Over the next four years tension mounted between king and archbishop over William's refusal to repair churches, to acknowledge Urban II as pope, and to give up his claim to lay investiture of the clergy. Refused permission to leave the realm, Anselm blatantly left England in November 1097 to see the pope, whereupon the king confiscated all church property belonging to Anselm and annulled all his transactions. During his first exile (1097–1100), Anselm was well received by the pope, completed his best-known work, *Cur Deus homo* (Why the God-Man), addressed the Council of Bari on the procession of the Holy Spirit (later published as *De processione Spiritus Sancti*), visited the abbey of Cluny, and wrote *De conceptu virginali et peccato originali* (On Virginal Conception and Original Sin).

On the death of William on 2 August 1100, Henry I was crowned king, succeeding his brother; the king and a number of barons invited Anselm to return to England. Henry, however, insisted that Anselm be reinvested and pay homage for his see. When Anselm refused, it was agreed that the case would be presented to the new pope, Paschal II. In Rome the king's envoy claimed that Henry would never submit to the loss of the right to invest the clergy, and the pope was equally adamant that he do so. On the journey back to England, Anselm was informed by the envoy that he would not be welcome in England unless he recognized all rights claimed by the king. Anselm's second exile (1103–1106) ended in a compromise reached in Normandy between the king and the archbishop: Henry relented on the issue of lay investiture of the clergy, and Anselm allowed payment by an English bishop for temporalities of his see. Relative peace was restored, and Anselm composed his most significant work, *De concordia praescientiae et praedestinationis et gratiae Dei cum libero arbitrio* (On the Harmony between God's Foreknowledge, Predestination, Grace, and Free Choice). During Lent of 1109, Anselm became seriously ill and died on Wednesday of Holy Week, 21 April 1109.

Writings and Doctrine. Just as Anselm was always able to give "reasons" for the rectitude of his actions, so as a theologian he was always ready to give "justifying reasons" *(rationes necessariae)* for the faith and hope that was in him (*1 Pt.* 3:15). In his writings, he touched on the whole Roman Catholic teaching found in scripture and the Fathers without adducing the authority of the scriptures to establish his conclusions. He tried instead to convince his readers "by rational arguments," by which he meant the reasonableness of his conclusions. When Lanfranc, who was not enthusiastic about Anselm's writing, suggested that scripture be quoted as an authority, Anselm replied that all his own statements could be supported by the Bible or Augustine and that he was only doing what Augustine had done in his *De Trinitate*, but more briefly (Epistle 1.68). Indeed, Anselm's writings are so thoroughly Augustinian in spirit and Boethian in logic that he can rightly be called "the father of Scholasticism."

Asked to explain his reflections of God's nature and attributes, Anselm compiled a book without a title,

which he began to refer to as *Exemplum meditandi de ratione fidei* (An Example of Meditating on the Rationale of Faith). When the work was readied for publication around 1076, Anselm renamed it *Monologion de ratione fidei*, meaning a monologue or soliloquy on reasons for the faith. Anselm's work, like the Apostles' Creed, started with the existence of God, and then considered the Trinity, the life of Christ, and the "four last things." Although Anselm in the *Monologion* speaks as a believer, he argues that God must exist because (1) the grades of goodness in nature require an all-perfect good, (2) everything that exists requires a cause, and ultimately one supreme cause, and (3) the hierarchy of more or less perfect beings, since they cannot be infinite in number, requires an infinitely perfect being superior to all and inferior to none. From this all-perfect being, Anselm argued to all the truths of the Catholic faith.

Soon afterward he wondered whether he could show by a single, brief argument "what we believe and preach about God . . . that he is what we believe him to be," and he completed a second treatise on the same material by 1078. When Anselm came to give it a title, he called it *Fides quaerens intellectum* (Faith Seeking Insight), then simply *Proslogion* (Address), because it is addressed either to himself or to God in prayer. This single brief argument presented in chapters 2 through 4 is original, startling, and undoubtedly the most famous of all Anselm's contributions to religious thought.

The argument may be summarized thus: According to our faith, God is that being than which no greater can be thought. Even the fool, on hearing the phrase "that than which no greater can be thought," understands what he hears, and what he understands is in the understanding. But "that than which no greater can be thought" cannot exist in the understanding alone, for what exists in reality as well as in understanding would be greater than what exists in understanding alone. Therefore, "that than which no greater can be thought" must exist in reality, or it would at the same time be and not be "that than which no greater can be thought." Hence God exists in reality. Even the fool who says in his heart, "There is no God" (*Ps.* 14:1), would have to admit that God necessarily exists in reality as well as in his understanding.

Almost immediately this ontological argument, as Kant was to call it, was criticized politely but very insistently by Gaunilo, a monk of the abbey of Marmoutier in his *Liber pro insipiente* (For the Fool); Anselm replied to this in his *Liber apologeticus*. Thereafter Anselm requested that both these works be appended to his *Proslogion* in all future copies. In defense of the fool, Gaunilo raised two main objections: first, we have no distinct idea of God from which to infer his existence;

second, one cannot rely on existence in thought to prove existence outside thought, for although one can conceive the idea of the most perfect of all blessed islands, it does not follow that that blessed island also exists in reality. To which Anselm replied: passing from existence in thought to existence in reality is possible and necessary only when it is a question of the greatest being one can conceive. Whatever exists except God alone can be thought of as not existing. Over the centuries there have always been thinkers to take up the argument and refashion it or reject it. Bonaventure, Duns Scotus, Descartes, Leibniz, and Hegel took it up, whereas Thomas Aquinas, Locke, and Kant followed Gaunilo in rejecting it, each for different reasons.

Between 1080 and 1085 Anselm wrote *De grammatico*, a useful introduction to logic, and *De veritate*, a thorough analysis of different kinds of truth, namely, truth in God as truth itself (cause of all truth), truth in things produced by God (ontological), and truth in the mind (logical) and in the will (moral), both measured by reality. During this same period he wrote *De libero arbitrio*, a work on the true nature of freedom, particularly regarding morality. True freedom for Anselm is not the ability to choose evil (sin) but the ability to choose different kinds of good as means to a worthy end. This led to his *De concordia gratiae Dei cum libero arbitrio* (1107–1108), an influential work that harmonized God's foreknowledge and grace with human freedom. Anselm's most important theological work was *Cur Deus homo* (1097–1100), followed by *De conceptu virginali*, a treatise on "necessary reasons" why God became sinless man by a virgin and died on the cross to redeem fallen humanity from sin.

The case for Anselm's canonization was presented to Rome around 1163 by Thomas à Becket when he was archbishop of Canterbury, but there is no record of the proceedings. However, a calendar from Christ Church, Canterbury, before 1170 mentions the transfer of the relics of "Saint Anselm the Archbishop" on 7 April and his feast day on 21 April. He was declared a doctor of the church by Pope Clement XI in 1720.

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JAMES A. WEISHEIPL

ANTHESTERIA. The Anthesteria was the main spring festival in the Greek Attic calendar, celebrated in the middle of the month Anthesterion (mid-February to mid-March). Dedicated to Dionysos, the ceremonies lasted for three days, from the eleventh to the thirteenth of the month. The days were respectively known as Pithoigia, Choes, and Chutroi, meaning "opening of the barrels," "cups," and "pots." Starting at sunset before the festive days began, people brought their agricultural tools and vessels in from the fields and vineyards.

On the first day the ceremonies started with a tasting of wine cellared the previous autumn at a small sanctuary of Dionysos en Limnais ("Dionysos of the marshes") that was open only during this time, all other sanctuaries being closed. Everybody, including children over the age of three, began drinking at the same time on the order of the king and at the sounding of trumpets, but each individual sat alone and in silence. The celebrants thus renounced the conviviality that normally accompanies food, drink, and table talk. The drinking culminated in a contest, the winner being the first to empty a two-liter jug. During the festival, distinctions of rank and status were abolished. The solemnity of the occasion may derive not only from the etiological myth about the reception of Orestes, polluted by slaying his mother, but also from the belief that the spirits of the dead rose on this "day of pollution," as Choes was also called. People chewed buckthorn and painted their doors with pitch to ward off these evil spirits.

The second day ended where the first had started: the drunken revelers carried their ivy-decorated drinking cups back to the sanctuary of Dionysos, handing them over to the women's collegiate of the fourteen Geraiai ("the venerable ones"), led by the queen. The queen, consort of the *archōn basileus* ("king of ruling houses"), then performed the central rite of the festival through her communion with Dionysos in the *hieros gamos* ("sacred marriage"), a nocturnal rite attended only by the women's priestly college. Though the concrete consummation of this divine marriage is shrouded in mystery, the mythical origin of the ritual dramatization clearly refers to the marriage between the ill-fated Ariadne and

Dionysos, another somber connection between Dionysos and the world of the dead.

The third day was completely given over to Hermes Chthonios, ruler of the underworld of the dead. Various cereals were cooked in honey and the meal was offered to the *kēres*, spirits that might otherwise become noxious. The day ended with the invocation, "Out of the doors, ye *kēres!* The Anthesteria is over." Before that, however, a number of contests were held, the most enigmatic being one where virginal girls swing on chairs hung from trees. This is said to have been the reenactment of the unhappy death of Erigone, daughter of Ikarios, the bringer of wine (Ikarios was a double of Dionysos): when her father was slain by drunken herders, Erigone hanged herself on the branches of a tree that grew out of his body. This points to the double aspect of the festival: the darker side of the chthonic realm of the dead, and of sacrifices by hanging, and the brighter side of the promise of resurrection, marriage, and fertility in spring.

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KLAUS-PETER KOEPPING

ANTHONY OF PADUA (1195?–1231), born Ferdinand de Bulhoes; Franciscan preacher, miracle worker, and saint. Born in Lisbon, Portugal, Ferdinand de Bulhoes entered the monastery of the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine while still an adolescent. He was ordained a priest at the monastery of his order in Coimbra in 1219. Inspired by the martyrdom of Franciscan missionaries in Morocco, he left the monastery to join the Friars Minor in 1220, taking the religious name of Anthony. After an abortive attempt at mission work in

Morocco, Anthony went to Italy, where he participated in the general chapter of the Franciscans at Assisi (1221) and, presumably, met Francis of Assisi. In 1223 Anthony was appointed lector in theology at the Franciscan house of studies in Bologna. A letter from Francis, of disputed authenticity, ratified that position as long as such study did not "extinguish the spirit of prayer and devotion."

By 1226 Anthony had been appointed the Franciscan minister for the Emilia (a region in northern Italy) and served as a Franciscan delegate to the Vatican. In that same year he received permission from Pope Gregory IX to relinquish all offices in order to devote his life to preaching, for which he had demonstrated great flair. For the rest of his brief life, Anthony traveled through the region around Padua as an incessant preacher of reform and as an obdurate opponent of heresy. In 1231 he died at Padua; Gregory IX canonized him the following year at solemn ceremonies in the Cathedral of Spoleto. In 1946 Pius XII named him a doctor of the church.

The only surviving authentic writings of Anthony are two series of sermons, one for Sundays (Sermones domenicales) and one for various feast days of the liturgical year (Sermones in solemnitatibus sanctorum). From these writings scholars have attempted to reconstruct the saint's theological vision.

Anthony's theology was shaped both by his use of the sermon and by his stated desire to combat the twin heresies of the Cathari and the dissident evangelical sects like the Waldensians. He emphasized the incarnational themes of theology, the need for interior conversion, and a return to the sacraments, especially the sacrament of penance, as a sign of reconciliation with the church. The framework of his sermons was most typically constructed by harmonizing the scriptural texts of the liturgy celebrated on the day he preached. While the sermons were meant for general consumption they still reflect considerable learning, in both theological and mystical literature.

Anthony's mysticism was influenced heavily by Augustine of Hippo and the twelfth-century exegete Richard of Saint-Victor; he shows no direct dependence on the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite. His scriptural exegesis, based on the traditional fourfold sense of scripture, leans heavily toward the moral sense of the text, which he uses both to exhort to virtue and to warn against the reigning heresies of the time. His focus, typically Franciscan, on the humanity of Jesus led to an emphasis on the healing virtue of the wounds of Christ. Some have seen in the sermons of Anthony the beginnings of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus, a devotional *figura* that would blossom fully only in late medieval

piety. His series of sermons on the Virgin Mary constitute a brief compendium of Mariology; his name was invoked by Pius XII as one of the doctors who held the doctrine of the bodily assumption of Mary into heaven, a doctrine defined by the pontiff in 1950.

While Anthony's contemporaries praised his deep knowledge of scripture and his power as an apologist and preacher, posterity best remembers the saint as a thaumaturge. Celebrated in art and narrated in legend, his miracles have the simple charm associated with early Franciscan charisma. The center of Anthony's cult is the Basilica of Il Santo in Padua, which incorporates the old Church of Santa Maria Materdomini where Anthony was originally buried. One of Donatello's famous bronze panels at the basilica depicts an unbeliever's donkey, which, to the evident discomfiture of its owner, is venerating the Eucharist held by Anthony. The popular fourteenth-century Italian anthology of Franciscan stories known as the *Fioretti* (Little Flowers) reflects Anthony's importance in the estimation of the early Franciscans by associating him with the stories of Francis and his earliest companions. The *Fioretti* tells of Anthony preaching to the fish near Rimini after the heretics of the city refused to hear him. The literary similarity of that story to the one of Francis preaching to the birds is patent.

In the centuries after his death the cult of Saint Anthony developed with an intensity second only to that of Francis himself. From that popular devotionalism springs both some common beliefs (a prayer to Saint Anthony will retrieve lost articles) and charitable practices, such as the collection of alms for the poor under the rubric of "Saint Anthony's bread."

The iconography of Saint Anthony has had considerable development over the centuries. The earliest representation of the saint is very much like that of the early pictures of Francis: a young man dressed in a poor habit with a young and unbearded face. He is often shown with an open book in his left hand, while holding in the other a tongue of fire. The latter symbol was most likely borrowed from the iconography of Anthony the Abbot.

By the fifteenth century Anthony is shown with a flowering lily branch in his hand (a symbol of purity) and a book (a symbol of his theological acumen), as the statue by Jacopo Sansovino (in the Church of San Petronio in Bologna) and another in Padua attributed to Donatello attest. By the end of the fifteenth century Anthony, under the influence of popular miracle stories, is often depicted carrying the Christ Child in his arms. This theme became extremely popular in the post-Reformation period, as evidenced in paintings by Esteban

Murillo and José Ribera. One variation of this theme is Anthony Van Dyck's Brera altarpiece of the Virgin extending the child Jesus to the expectant arms of the saint. Anthony's role as a theologian and antiheretical apologist is not often depicted in art but he does appear, along with the other doctors of the church, in the Brizio Chapel of the Cathedral of Orvieto in a large work by Luca Signorelli.

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LAWRENCE S. CUNNINGHAM

ANTHROPOLOGY, ETHNOLOGY, AND RELIGION. In his classic discussion of "the sick soul" in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), William James observes that "philosophic theism has always shown a tendency to become pantheistic and monistic, and to consider the world as one unit of absolute fact." In contrast, popular or practical theism has "ever been more or less frankly pluralistic, not to say polytheistic, and shown itself perfectly well satisfied with a universe composed of many original principles." While James ultimately deems the divine principle supreme and the rest subordinate, his immediate sympathies lie with less absolute "practicalities," and he situates analyses of religious experience within the felt tension between theistic monism and the pluralism of actual populations. [*See the biography of William James.*] In many respects the anthropological study of religion has sustained and enlarged upon these sympathies.

Anthropology's traditional concentration on nonliterate societies has shaped its approach to religious practice and belief in general. But ethnological theory has seldom been confined to so-called primitive peoples, tribal groups, or even "marginalized" peoples discredited by a dominant religious establishment. Ethnographers have long addressed religious contexts evolved from what Karl Jaspers called "the Axial Age," marked by world-rejecting beliefs in either a transcendental realm or an abstractly negative realm distinct from the worldly or mundane. Anthropologists encounter the entire range of religious values in ideal and implementation at every scale of civilization and all manner of society, sect, and renunciation. Still, when broaching

cultural circumstances of world religions, anthropologists tend to emphasize the practitioners' more immediate transmundane concerns—from spirit cults to ancestor worship—whose persistence can qualify those transcendental doctrines or ethical canons (paramount for historians of religion) professed by priests, monks, and scribes.

Methodological Foundations. The contemporary anthropology of religion builds upon many foundations: Émile Durkheim's view of religious "social facts," which sets aside issues of truth versus error; Max Weber's ideal types of implicit universal processes behind religious, economic, and bureaucratic reformisms; Marxist and Freudian explorations of ideological and expressive behavior. [*See the biographies of Durkheim, Freud, Marx, and Weber.*] Different anthropologists employ various approaches, such as phenomenological and hermeneutic interpretations of religious life and sacred symbols or semiotic analysis of communication codes; they apply complex models of social interaction, ritual speech, mythic order and transgression, cosmological archetypes, and historical forces of scapegoating, sacrifice, oppression, and revolution. Religion appears in mechanisms of socialization and in dialectical process of change; its manifest and latent patterns underlie both consensus and transformation, both integration and subversion.

Rival definitions of religion characterize anthropological efforts. Such scholars as Melford E. Spiro retain a notion of the superhuman and rebuke Durkheim for diluting religion to whatever is ritually "set apart." Others, such as Clifford Geertz, empty religion of superhuman, supernatural, or holy content, defining it generally as a set of powerful symbols conjoined to rhetorics of persuasion that are uniquely realistic to adherents and apparent in their moods, motivation, and conceptions. Some working definitions of religion support Mircea Eliade's sense of a distinctive *homo religiosus;* others pose religion as a basically compensatory reaction to mundane deprivation, suffering, or violence. Regardless, anthropologists explore sacred values across domains of illness and cure, aesthetics, law, politics, economy, philosophy, sexuality, ethics, warfare, play, sport, and the many kinds of classifications and performances that both organize and challenge cultural systems of knowledge and affect.

Like the topics and boundaries, vexed issues in the anthropology of religion keep expanding. Examples include the following questions. Is the discipline's task explanatory, requiring objectivity, or interpretive, requiring multiple, nonaligned empathies? Is one's goal to bundle religious usages into tidy symptoms of basic human drives, or is it to unravel, even transvalue, such

usages through informed readings of cultural and historical contexts, ritual activity and speech, priestly texts, and contested commentaries generated in the name of *religio?* Even scholars committed to nonpartisan approaches have become noticeably uneasy with assumptions that their efforts can be value-free. Any approach to religion may necessarily entail preconceptions that qualify under certain definitions as themselves religious. On the more practical side, research on active religions is often declared off limits, either by their adherents or by agents of the governments seeking to control them. For these and other reasons, both the discipline's findings and the discipline itself have become controversial. Critics and practitioners alike are alert to the confusing obstacles and opportunities inherent in comparative studies of religions.

Few introductory works in anthropology are informed by a coherent view of religion; one exception is James L. Peacock and A. Thomas Kirsch's textbook (1980), which employs Robert N. Bellah's Parsonian framework of evolving differential roles in religious and political institutions. Scholarly consensus in the anthropology of religions remains agonistic at best, a situation indicated by William A. Lessa and Evon Z. Vogt's venerable *Reader in Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach* (1979). This repeatedly updated collection of vintage and vanguard articles suggests the varied results and aspirations that characterize this protean field.

Methodological Critiques. As the anthropology of religion advances, it properly intensifies its retrospection. One can better appreciate current trends by reconsidering the emergence of specialized scholarship on primitive religions.

Fallacies in nineteenth-century quests for the origins of religion, taken as a distinct category of human experience, have been often noted. E. E. Evans-Pritchard's succinct *Theories of Primitive Religion* (1965), for example, enumerates earlier, now-rejected studies on the stages of man's religious impulse, proposed in different combinations and sequences by successive evolutionist scholars. In these studies, besides monotheism we find fetishism, manism, nature-mythism, animism, totemism, dynamism, magism, polytheism, and certain psychological states (p. 104). [*See the biography of Evans-Pritchard.*] Although some such complexes may be real enough—one thinks particularly of shamanism—none demonstrably existed as a distinct stage in a progression either toward religious sagacity or beyond it into "mature" scientific objectivity. Recent correlations between religious types and socioeconomic levels appear less monolithic: for example, the shamans of flexibly structured hunter and gatherer societies versus the priests and prophets of stratified civilizations. But

even these schemes underestimate copious evidence of coexisting religious specializations enacted as divination, prophecy, calendrical ceremonies, and many blends of magic, sorcery, and thaumaturgy.

In 1962 Claude Lévi-Strauss published a critique of the history of abstracting "totemism," which he defined broadly as analogies between social divisions and categories of the natural surroundings. Since then anthropologists have continued reexamining many analyses produced in the vain pursuit of origins. Evans-Pritchard, again, captures the flavor of prejudicial dichotomies that usually, but not inevitably, favored Europeans: "We are rational, primitive peoples [are] prelogical, living in a world of dreams and make-believe, of mystery and awe; we are capitalists, they communists; we are monogamous, they promiscuous; we are monotheists, they fetishists, animists, pre-animists or what have you, and so on" (p. 105). Similar stereotypes adorned antievolutionist arguments as well, such as A. R. Wallace's *Natural Selection and Tropical Nature* (1890), in which Wallace's spiritist sympathies inclined him to excuse the human species from evolutionary processes: "Natural selection could only have endowed savage man with a brain a few degrees superior to that of an ape, whereas he actually possesses one very little inferior to that of a philosopher" (p. 202). Wallace thus managed to offend everyone—"savage man," the ape, the philosopher, and the evolutionists alike. His awkward rationalization nicely illustrates the invidious comparisons across types, species, and specialized roles that characterized many nineteenth-century attitudes.

The twentieth century brought vigorous responses to Social Darwinism, eugenics movements, and other theories of qualitative divisions in the human species. Franz Boas and his followers in America, Durkheimians in France, and some diffusionists and functionalists in Britain and elsewhere attacked patently false evolutionist schemes of myth, magic, and religion. Scholars today continue to debunk "awe theories" such as those put forth in A. H. Keane's article "Ethnology" in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (vol. 5, Edinburgh, 1912). Keane recapitulates notions of psycholatry, nature worship, the priority of magic, and primitive confusion between the unclean and the holy—common subjects of debate ordering the rivalries among many comparative philologists, mythologists, and ethnologists, including F. Max Müller, Andrew Lang, W. Robertson Smith, E. B. Tylor, and James G. Frazer. Keane repeats theories of the concept of independent soul, according to which the soul extends from one's "own person" to one's fellows, then to animals, plants, and finally to the organized world, itemized somewhat breathlessly as follows: "Such conspicuous and lifelike

objects as the raging torrent, the rolling seas, snowy peaks, frowning crests, steep rocky walls, gloomy gorges, dark woods, trees, crags, clouds, storms, lightning, tornadoes, heavenly bodies, until all nature becomes animated and everything personified and endowed with a living soul" (p. 526). The countless dubious theories of religious origins and their metaphorical extensions at least reveal symbolic classifications implicit in Europeans' own views of nature and, unfortunately, of human cultures as well.

Historical Revaluations. Anthropologists today seem willing to assess neglected intricacies of dated works, despite their errors. In the history of the anthropology of religion in particular, the way has been cleared not for revisionism but for serious rereading; we are perhaps verging on a more anthropological attitude toward anthropology's own past. Books by early professional anthropologists and the founding figures of Indology, comparative mythology, and folklore up to 1860 (surveyed in Feldman and Richardson, 1972) were punctuated by false explanations; but many of them also manage to involve readers in the unfamiliar, the inexplicable, even the forbidden. Narrative and documentary strategies and rhetorical and discursive devices of bygone scholarship are currently being scrutinized. Even "progressive" historians, such as Evans-Pritchard, resist simply dismissing convoluted studies by R. R. Marett and A. E. Crawley, or Lucien Lévy-Bruhl's controversial ideas of prelogical mentality. [*See the biographies of Lévy-Bruhl and Marett.*] There is evident dissatisfaction with a "use and abuse" self-legitimating history of the discipline. Old stereotypes of scientific progress are being shaken, sometimes gently, sometimes violently. Less readily does the field's past divide in positivistic fashion into "before Malinowski" or "before Boas," versus "after." The sustained field research and systematic models of language and social organization established by formulators of modern anthropological standards remain definitive developments. But it is not certain that conceptual breakthroughs coordinated data-gathering. One reason for the decline of a "maturation model" of the discipline's history is this: anthropologists of religion—both the bookish and the fieldworking variety—do not exist in isolation from other disciplines and experiences. James G. Frazer's renowned *The Golden Bough* (1890), for example, was a successor to the work of Gibbon and Ruskin as much as to that of Tylor; ideas of scapegoats and the durability of liturgy-like rites reflected Frazer's endeavors in folklore and religious and cultural history as much as in ethnology. Less seemingly literary scholars as well—including the Bronislaw Malinowski of *Magic, Science and Religion, and Other Essays* (1952) and the Robert

H. Lowie of the somewhat perfunctory *Primitive Religion* (1948)—were influenced by diverse disciplines and styles of writing. [*See the biographies of Frazer, Lowie, Malinowski, and Tylor.*]

Standardized histories of the discipline have distorted chronologies of development; some new-sounding themes were found not to be so new after all; old paradigms could be discarded before they were exhausted; and figures marginal to eventually dominant schools were sometimes worthier than subsequently portrayed. Durkheim's circle, for example, closed ranks to exclude scholars less committed to the group's view of "socio-logic." Durkheimians were in turn neglected after their hybrid expertise in ethnology, sociology, history, and comparative philology (particularly Sanskrit) was overshadowed by the fieldwork imperative, particularly in the United States and among British functionalists. Certain British scholars as well were consequently "marginalized."

An interesting case in several respects is R. R. Marett. His nonevolutionist entry "Primitive Religion," in volume 23 of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1911), is nearly contemporaneous with Keane's article "Ethnology," although conventional histories often imply that scholarship advanced beyond evolutionism monolithically. The *Britannica* format in effect contrasted "primitive religion" (with cross-references to "Animism," "Fetishism," "Magic," "Mythology," "Prayer," "Ritual," "Sacrifice," and "Totemism") with "higher religion." Marett's discussion, however, does not broach origins; rather it catalogs categories of "the sacred," providing representative examples of what are called its "activity," "exploitation," and "results." He adopts a trusted anthropological convention (perhaps traceable to Latin Christendom's methodical incorporation of select practices and lexemes from pagans it aimed to convert) in which modes of the sacred are aligned with exotic counterparts. *Sacred* can imply "forbidden" (as in the Latin, *sacer*, whence the English word is derived; as well as in the Polynesian, *tabu*), "mysterious" (Siouan, *wakan*), "secret" (Aranda, *tjurunga*), "potent" (Melanesian, *mana;* Huron, *orenda*), "animate" (as in the phenomenon labeled *animism* by certain nineteenth-century anthropologists), or "ancient" (Aranda, *alcheringa*, "the Dreaming"). This constellation of North American Indian, Oceanic, and Australian Aboriginal terms indexes, as it were, the variable universality of the sacred.

Under "results" Marett considers what might today be called religion's functions, including education, government, maintenance of food supply, reinforcement of kinship and family bonds, enhanced sexuality, and integrated personalities. Marett's "exploitation" covers dimensions of ritual process and ceremonial celebra-

tion; he cites cases of acquisition, concentration, induction (including sacrifice), renovation, demission, prophylactic insulation, and "direction," suggestive of an ethos or those "moods" later signaled by Geertz. He even addresses transformative properties of religion that return secular government and aristocratic traditions to a more primitive, democratic spirit. "Everyone," notes Marett, "has his modicum of innate *mana*" (1911, p. 67). Under "the abuse of the sacred" he merges religion with individualized resistance. By "activity" Marett intends general motivations and meanings of the sacred: fecundity, transmissibility (parallel to Frazer's notion of contagion), and finally ambiguity and relativity, both apparently construed positively.

Marett, then, anticipates such well-known recent approaches as Victor Turner's, which expands Arnold van Gennep's "rites of passage" to include ritual performances that consolidate structure with antistructure and coordinate themes of liminality or periodic involvement with a regenerative in-between state. [*See the biographies of Turner and van Gennep.*] That the views of Marett (many of whose shortcomings are here deemphasized) are in part compatible with much later theories is obscured by his casual vocabulary. Like Arthur M. Hocart, he retained interpretive jargon that suggests European or Indo-European religiosity to be his primary concern. Although Marett's "sacraments of simple folk" or Hocart's Hindu, Fiji, and Australian "sacraments" in fact approximate liminal rites for celebrating changes in office or social state, their rubrics ran counter to the increasing fashion for more technical-sounding coinages in theory and method.

Many other works and scholars could be used to illustrate the basic point: illusions of a simple heritage of influence and unpoliticized progress—out of darkness into light—of an anthropology of religion are being dispelled. Interest in primitive religion has always derived from ideas of exoticism that were pervasive in European conceptualizations of cultural differences (and efforts to subjugate those differences). The anthropology of religion, even when centered on fieldwork results and organized by the conviction that ritual and belief have direct social consequences, has never proceeded in a simple developmental line insulated from the broad history of ideas of otherness, which is charged with philosophical and political implications. Errors and prejudices of past scholarship must be corrected, of course; but the cultural and historical values that sustained that scholarship must also be anthropologically interpreted. A scholar content to denounce his predecessors' denunciations of primitive superstition risks committing the very sin he decries; in effect, he now dismisses past anthropology as simply "primitive."

In sum, the anthropology of religion is growing more alert to its own complicity in the paradoxes it investigates. Consider, for example, the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein's notations (1979) on his copy of a condensed edition of Frazer's *The Golden Bough:* "Here, purging magic has itself the character of magic" ("Das Ausschalten der Magie hat hier den Charakter der Magie selbst"). It may be recalled that Frazer's own ambivalent suggestions that primitive superstitions underlie civilization's basic tenets of political authority, private property, and truth were delivered in the form of midnight lectures styled after the strange rites they claimed to reveal. Frazer, not devoid of Romantic irony (particularly in *Psyche's Task*), was possibly sensitive to such paradoxes as those Wittgenstein would later inscribe in somewhat superior fashion in the margins of the book. Regardless, Wittgenstein's own *Philosophical Investigations* may imply that even purging the purging of magic (as when Wittgenstein corrects Frazer) "has the character of magic" as well. The history of scholarship thus pulses to cyclic rhythms of victimhood and occasional redemption, redolent of widely distributed patterns of ritual and religion.

Trends and Prospects. A review by Clifford Geertz (1968) of the anthropological study of religion provides a point of departure for surveying subsequent developments. Geertz discusses psychodynamic frameworks based on Freud, on theories of culture and personality represented by Clyde Kluckhohn's works, and on sociopsychological components of Malinowski's functionalism. One persistent issue concerns whether beliefs and rites exist to "reduce ambiguity" (a functionalist notion) or to harness it, thus generating sustained worlds of semantic, emotive, and intellectual values. The latter view is held by diverse scholars disenchanted with functionalist assumptions that religion bolsters society, which itself is equated with a machinelike or an organismlike system of reinforcements that vent pressure built up by anything dysfunctional or indigestible, like so much steam or gas.

Some studies pursue possibilities of universal patterns linking ritual and neurosis. Others seek less to discover whether all peoples harbor, say, an Oedipal complex than whether certain rituals serve purposes analogous to Western psychotherapies. Sudhir Kakar (1982), for example, has compared Muslim and Hindu curative, shamanic, and Tantric techniques to psychotherapeutic devices; he likens demonological constructions to Freudian idioms yet stipulates that India does not share the West's tradition of introspection. Contextualized investigations of parallels between Western and Asian psychodynamics include works by Gananath Obeyesekere and Bruce Kapferer on Sri Lanka, by Rob-

ert A. Paul on Nepal and Tibet, and by Sherry Ortner on Nepal. Ideas of Freud, Jung, and other luminaries such as Gregory Bateson, Ruth Benedict, and Paul Radin remain pertinent in analyzing styles of therapeutic narrative and ritual interaction coordinated with worldviews of disease and its cure. [*See the biographies of Benedict, Jung, and Radin.*]

The second area reviewed by Geertz, sociological approaches to religion, merges with interpretations of symbolic forms that have dominated postwar research. Durkheim's view of religion's social foundation remains central. What Durkheim did not do was to explain away religion as some sort of mass delusion. What he did do was to link religious rites and ideas to the fact that any society is both divided and coherent, both subcategorized and at least periodically "in unison." Durkheim's *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* continued his earlier emphases on varieties of the division of labor; on categories implicit in ritual objects, cosmography, and mythic tales; and on the compartmentalized tasks and specialized knowledge that enrich every social order. For Durkheim's school a "tribe" was "international," composed of segments occasionally congregated in ritual gatherings but for other purposes dispersed. Totemic rites and ceremonies of competitive gift exchange do not simply reinforce something already existent; rather they constitute an additional axis of interrelations. This view of religion and society is less "consensualist" than certain translators, followers, and critics have suggested.

Another major source of social theory is Max Weber's work on emergent charismatic figures and Weber's followers who attempt to institutionalize his teachings. Weberians and other anthropologists study religious change; they investigate how routinization, secularization, modernization, and related disenchantments proceed; they question whether particular religions are inimical to certain kinds of economic and/or political rationalization. Assumptions that modernization is inevitably accompanied by secularization have been shaken by fresh evidence of fundamentalist revivals in societies where market forces and commercialization are intensifying. One may recall that for Weber, so-called secularization developed through a displacement of rationalized techniques from otherworldly monasticism into this-worldly routines. Reform movements and "enlightenments" may reflect less a defeat of the religious sector than the elimination of a distinction between otherworldly and in-worldly roles and institutions.

Some anthropologists reject the basic assumptions of both Durkheim and Weber, declaring any conjunction of "religion" and "church" (or churchlike entities) too

Hegelian. Alternatives include regarding religious activity as a subversive strain of individuation or as a decentering or randomizing of values that appear to cohere because of ideological or political forces overlooked by scholars in search of cultural integration. Nevertheless, the most prominent bodies of work of the past generation by such anthropologists as Victor Turner, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Louis Dumont, Clifford Geertz, Edmund Leach, and Mary Douglas remain indebted to Durkheim and Weber in particular.

One favored prognosis of the mid-1960s has not materialized: a total anthropological theory of religion, combining historical, psychological, sociological, and semantic or cultural dimensions. The interrelations, contradictions, and dissonance of data, contexts, events, and interpretive methods have multiplied to the point of prohibiting any imaginable synthesis. What has emerged instead will be examined below. Some of those who once anticipated the unified approach deem the present situation a crisis. Others, Geertz foremost among them, mindful of William James's "many original principles," find a pluralist profusion of issues and aims to be warranted by the complexity of religious realities that anthropology attempts to illuminate.

Many recent works analyze religious experience as in one way or another dialectical. Others examine religious life as it is negotiated through arts of rhetoric or social tropes stressed by such scholars as the literary theorist Kenneth Burke. Some investigate religion by focusing on its languagelike codes, which appear to be in continual mutation and reformulation, even when not caught up in the dynamic trends (e.g., millenarian and messianic movements, cargo cults) or revitalizations that punctuate religious history or a particular group's sense of that history. Just as tradition is now recognized as being continually reinvented, so convictions of timelessness are themselves created processually. Anthropologists, moreover, are increasingly attentive to dissent and hidden alternatives overlooked when scholars take for granted the division of peoples into cultures, which are conceived of as consensual creeds. Circumstances once deemed degraded and therefore marginal to anthropology's central concerns—such as missionary efforts, competing brands of religious authority, covert cults, hybrid creeds (syncretism), and tourism—are being carefully inspected. Religious rivalry, blends, borrowings, and commercialization have shaped the historical and contemporary experience of much of the world's population, including tribesmen and traditional-seeming peoples.

What one might call "religion on the move" is not inevitably reactionary or compensatory. In his opus on Bwiti religion and other Fang cults in the Gabon Re-

public, James W. Fernandez discloses the capacity of an emergent religious culture "to create its own realities" (1982). Yet he warns against exaggerating the coherence of Bwiti cosmology, for this would falsify its practitioners' more subtle intellectual achievement (p. 570). Scholars studying other regions have also demonstrated the flexibility of cosmological categories. Obeyesekere's work (1984) on Sri Lanka's cult of the goddess Pattini traces a changing pantheon over space and time; shifting deities coordinate specialized roles of priests, monks, and healers, and articulate factions within both Buddhism and Hinduism, between the two, and between both Buddhism and Hinduism and outsiders. Such play of oppositions in religious identities resembles the mythic fields of contrast in Hindu texts illuminated by Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, who adapts to philology Lévi-Strauss's views on variation and dialectical relations between neighboring myths and rituals. Past studies that have delineated apparently stable cosmologies—such as the depiction of the Dogon by Marcel Griaule, or the Ngaju Dyaks depicted by Hans Schärer—are being reinvestigated to determine what enabled certain informants or their interrogators to attribute fixity to their categories. Although religion is not timeless, it can be made to seem so, whether by its devotees or by scholars keen on recapturing something original. Other research that has contextualized and historicized religious cosmologies includes Alfonso Ortiz's studies of the Tewa Pueblo and Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff's works on the Amazonian Desána. In related developments, the adequacy of notions of belief, couched in pat generalizations such as "People X believe thus and so," are receiving serious critical scrutiny (Needham, 1973; Izard and Smith, 1982).

Advances in ethnographic knowledge of religion and ritual practice, coupled with consideration of the political and philosophical implications of both collecting and cataloging that knowledge, have continued in every region. Complexities in religious contexts and in power structures behind texts and ceremonies have made some anthropologists wary of designating their studies "the religion of" any particular place. This type of title can seem too synthetic or overgeneralized, although works such as Weber's *The Religion of India* (1958) and Geertz's influential *The Religion of Java* (1960) deal with political tensions, economic factions, and conflicting theodicies as much as they deal with religious integration.

Methodological Accommodations. Concern with religious transformations has renewed interest in many classic topics: rituals of sacrifice; nostalgia for lost pasts; utopian visions; charismatic leaders, curers, and performers; life histories of individual practitioners; pu-

rity or pollution codes; trickster motifs; clowning and ritual inversions; witchcraft and sorcery; and left-hand and right-hand magic. Following the suggestions of Marcel Mauss, magic, freed from connotations of irrationality or error, becomes something like an enacted subjunctive mood, a "would that it were" outlined in special syllables and objects, a grammatical category "danced out" in speech and *materia*. [*See the biography of Mauss.*] Less corporate forms of worship and restriction, such as prayer, private taboos, chant and trance, hallucinogenic quests, religious techniques of the body, and meditation are being investigated either as evidence of deviation—as allowable improvisations upon culturally defined themes—or as possibilities of free play that escape constraints of local authority. Whatever else religion might involve across cultures, it entails speaking or silencing and sometimes writing; persuading, classifying, and acting out; arranging boundaries (periodically permeable), interrelating arts, and formulating logical and ethical codes; manipulating peers, rivals, inferiors, and superiors; negating, possibly suffering, perhaps escaping, and much more. Anthropologists have thus adapted insights from sociolinguistics, philosophies of translation, literary theory, rhetoric, structuralism and poststructuralism, performance studies, folklore, political theory, gender analysis, and other areas to augment the generality and specificity, and sometimes the obscurity, of their descriptions and comparisons.

Fruitful exchanges between anthropology and literary criticism may blur the boundaries of these two pursuits. Marxism, structuralism, poststructuralism, and semiotics offer a larger sense of literature than did traditional canonical approaches. Such scholars as Raymond Williams, Michel de Certeau, Tzvetan Todorov, Jonathan Culler, the followers of Walter Benjamin, Mikhail Bakhtin, and others have managed interdisciplinary accommodations between theories of literary production and theories of culture. General models of "the text" advanced by such luminaries as Paul Ricoeur have helped change the way scholars look at ritual activity, manuals of religious practice, documents of historical conquest, and even the notion of culture itself. Just as texts are never read innocently, cultures appear never to be crossed innocently, according to anthropologists who apply the metaphor of reading to what ethnographers do. Moreover, complex properties of "literariness"—nonstop paradox, writing and its philosophical effacement, and continuous intertextuality—are discovered in many cultural and religious usages, marked by tricksterlike play between rules, their transgressions, and other subtle subversions. The documentation of cross-cultural encounters at the heart of anthropology may

run parallel—stylistically as well as epistemologically—to the history of literary discourse, particularly the novel and genres of satire. Challenges to any positivistic sense of ethnography that downplays such parallels have been multiplying in anthropological accounts of religion, aesthetic performance, and varieties of oral and written enactments.

Multiplying methods and issues in the anthropology of religion have converged with scholarship in the history of popular religion, the sociology of marginal religions, and the analysis of systematic differences among orthodoxies, heterodoxies, and heresies. Historians of witchcraft, for example, now resemble anthropologists of the past; and anthropologists are today less content with synchronic methods, even as heuristic devices. Ethnographers document not just Kwakiutl, Nuer, and Ndembu but Quakers, Pentecostals, and Primitive Baptists. Structuralist techniques for analyzing oral mythologies are turned toward scripture; and approaches from biblical exegesis, typological analysis, and hermeneutics are now adapted by anthropologists to all kinds of cultures. Accordingly, controversies grow "curiouser and curiouser."

Long-term directions of religious change have sometimes been decided by the selective, possibly violent, suppression of heterodoxies. Moreover, the modern anthropological record is distorted by colonialist and nationalist efforts to consolidate standardized, controllable creeds and confessions. Philological and ethnographic enterprises themselves have often been in league with forces of centralization—a theme of many feminist and Marxist accounts; hence the growing concern with alternative forms of religious authority and leadership, often female-mediated ones. Researchers increasingly tend to consider who profits and who suffers when thaumaturgical beliefs lapse. What are the consequences when new forms of knowledge compete with conventions that tie physical, psychic, and spiritual prosperity and well-being to concrete ritual practice in delicate balances of interlocking sympathies, risky equilibriums, sacred and dangerous affinities, and various periodic cycles? In Asia, Africa, the Americas, Oceania, and in Europe as well, many studies of peasantries, regional cultures, and commercial networks stress domestic rituals and local confessions resistant to one or another politico-religious hegemony. Examples include work on popular vestiges of European hermeticism revealed by historian Frances A. Yates and on spiritism in both Europe and its colonies. Similarly, Dumont, Stanley J. Tambiah, Charles F. Keyes, and other anthropologists studying South and Southeast Asia have accentuated spheres of sustained ritual, such as Tantrism,

that serve as source-pools of symbols and practice used to set apart rival orthodoxies and competing sects over time.

Recent controversial works, such as Edward Said's influential *Orientalism* (New York, 1975), have implicated comparative studies in general, including anthropology, with the forces of colonialist oppression that continue in the contemporary organization of knowledge and power. Many cultures, religions, and ethnic groups once scrutinized exclusively by ethnographers from the outside now produce their own scholars or send select members abroad for anthropological training. Indeed, several studies mentioned in this article were written by investigators who could be labeled "third world" scholars. At one level this important and desirable development represents an expanded ethnological enfranchisement, an extension of voice to the once mute or silenced. Some commentators see this development as a victory over an earlier anthropology's parasitism, a condition that benefited only the outside observer; others see it partly in continuity with ethnography's traditional task of presenting marginalized peoples and inscribing, across cultures and languages, evidence of the unwritten (preliterate social life, ritual praxis, religious action, and heterodoxy).

In any case, the fact that areas once subjected to ethnography now often subject themselves to ethnography tends not to quell but to reinvigorate ideological controversy. Some national governments are reluctant to admit foreign anthropologists, whose presence, they feel, would imply their people were "primitive." Those same governments, however, may send scholars abroad for training yet require that they return to perform ethnographic research. Obstacles abound for third-world scholars who might wish to practice their discipline elsewhere, particularly if they desire gainful employment back home. This situation seriously impedes the flowering of a fully comparative anthropology, especially in sensitive areas of religion often declared off limits. Homegrown ethnographers, of course, may be just as much outsiders to the peasant, tribal, or minority populations they often study as those we would intuitively identify as such, even if they share language and/or ethnicity. Educated "natives" whose researches are sponsored by a dominant government will likely be regarded with as much suspicion as were the colonial agents or the foreign freelance fieldworkers of yore.

Anthropological description and interpretation must thus be seen as inherently political. The classic distinction between native-observed and foreign-observer has simply assumed a subtler guise; today's polities internalize the division between knower and known. (Ac-

tually, certain forms of colonialism prefigured subtle polarities as well.)

Approaches to Future Study. Several recourses are available for students, laymen, and professionals who might understandably feel frustrated by the plethora of descriptions, theories, methods, and reevaluations of the discipline's findings and its legitimacy. One might, for example, concentrate on a particular topic, such as death rites, lately restored to prominence by both anthropologists and social historians. The study of funerary practices allows scholars to circumvent certain difficulties encountered in defining religion in the abstract. What cultures do to and with their bodies before and after death clarifies religious processes of continuity and schism when relations among the living are thus articulated or redefined with reference to the dead (Bloch and Parry, 1982; Huntington and Metcalf, 1979). Another recourse would be to review the history of documenting the religion or religions of a particular society or region. Interesting possibilities include studying the wealth of new evidence concerning ritual values and contradictions from once obscure areas such as highland New Guinea, opened to sustained research only after 1930, or examining repeatedly studied literate cultures, such as Bali, Indonesia, that contain rival sectors of sacred authority that relate in convoluted ways to the history of different religious and political forces engaged in the region. Finally, one might inspect particular bodies of scholarship in order to appreciate the contributions made by particular anthropologists. More or less manageable examples include the extensions by anthropologists of Georges Dumézil's views of the tripartite basis of Indo-European ideals of authority and continuity (Littleton, 1980); the ethnographic evidence supporting R. Gordon Wasson's monumental works on widespread hallucinogenic rites centered on fly agaric in both Asia and the New World (La Barre, 1970); or the corpus of Louis Dumont. Dumont's contributions range over South Indian ethnography, the comparative study of hierarchy and reciprocity, and the sources of Western political economy. He has set Hindu and European values into critical juxtaposition and established the terms of debate concerning the nature of caste and of systems based on hierarchy versus those committed to worldly individualism. His later work (1982) traces a Christian pedigree of modernity's individualistic ideology in a way that coordinates endeavors in anthropology, ethnology, and the history of religion as few anthropologists have ever managed.

The anthropology of religion, increasingly diverse and boundless, remains devoted to the understanding of religious differences. The discipline has passed beyond the phase of aspiring to confine in a monograph any culture's belief. Fieldwork results cannot be insulated from general issues in phenomenological, existential, hermeneutic, pragmatist, structuralist, or politicized study of religious practice and commentary. Nor can bold ideas in the comparative history of religions remain oblivious to actual contradictions—what Edmund Leach has called the dialectics of practical religion—lived out in religious hinterlands, beyond the margins of rival orthodoxies, and in religious centers as well. In the anthropology of religion, as in many interpretative pursuits of our postmodern age, there is nowhere left to hide. As William James foresaw in his postscript to *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, a sort of polytheism has, in truth, returned upon us.

[*For related discussions of method in the study of religion, see* Evolutionism; Psychology, *article on* Psychology of Religion; Sociology; Structuralism; *and* Study of Religion.]

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ANTHROPOMORPHISM, from the Greek *anthrōpos* ("human being") and *morphē* ("form"), is a modern term, attested since the eighteenth century, denoting the practically universal tendency to form religious concepts and ideas and, on a more basic level, to experience the divine, or the "numinous" (the term is used here as a convenient shorthand, without necessarily implying commitment to Rudolf Otto's theories), in the categories and shapes most readily available to human thinking—namely, the human ones. The idea has a long history in Western thought. Ancient Greek, including patristic, literature referred (contemptuously) to "anthropomorphites," meaning people holding anthropomorphic ideas of the divine. This term was also used in Latin by Augustine to refer to those who because of their "carnal thought imagine God in the image of corruptible man" (*Patrologia Latina* 42.39), and, under his influence, it continued to be used by authors as late as Leibniz in the seventeenth century.

Definitions and Distinctions. In a more general sense, anthropomorphism can be defined as the description of

nonmaterial, "spiritual" entities in physical, and specifically human, form. The idea of human form is an essential part of the definition, since otherwise one would have to deal with representations and manifestations of the divine in all possible material forms. Of course, sharp distinctions are often arbitrary and even misleading, especially since in many religious cultures, the gods often assume, both in mythology and in iconography, animal form (which is, strictly speaking, theriomorphism); mixed, hybrid, semianimal-semihuman form (which is, strictly speaking, therianthropism); or "unrealistic," wildly imaginative, or even grotesque forms. Deities may be conceived as wholly or partly animal, as were Hathor and Anubis, the cow goddess and jackal god in ancient Egyptian religion, or they may have animal *avatāra*s, as does Viṣṇu, who appears as fish, tortoise, man-lion, and boar. Gods and goddesses may have multiple heads or arms, as does Brahmā; goddesses may be many-breasted, as was the great goddess of Ephesus (Artemis); or they may be represented with ferociously "demonic" forms of face or figure and with nonnatural combinations of body parts, as are androgynes and some tricksters. Indian and ancient Egyptian religions, among others, provide a plethora of examples. Resorting once more to Otto's terminology, one could argue that it is precisely the nonhuman quality of theriomorphic or therianthropic representations that enables them to function as symbols of the numinous as the "wholly other." [*See* Animals *and* Therianthropism.]

While the phenomenon of anthropomorphism proper has been a central problem in the history of religions, theology, and religious philosophy (in terms of criticism of religion as well as of religion's internal struggles for a better self-understanding of its own symbolism), the transition from theriomorphism to anthropomorphism (according to the evolutionary view current until some decades ago) has often been viewed as marking a definite progress. Thus Hegel, in *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, praised Greek religion because its anthropomorphism signified that "man, as that which is truly spiritual, constitutes that which is genuinely true in the Greek gods." Elsewhere, in *Lectures on Aesthetics*, Hegel adds that Christianity is superior to Greek religion because it has taken anthropomorphism a decisive step farther: God is not merely the humanly shaped ideal of beauty and art but a "real, singular, individual, wholly God and wholly man, that has entered into the totality of the conditions of existence." This stands in marked contrast to the views of the German poet Schiller (1759–1805), who considered Christianity as inferior to Greek religion: "When the gods were more human, men were more divine" *(The Gods of Greece)*. One hardly need add that in medieval polemics both Islam and Ju-

daism condemned Christianity not only for its "polytheism" (meaning the doctrine of the Trinity) but also for its anthropomorphism.

A distinction is frequently made between physical anthropomorphism (anthropomorphism proper) and mental or psychological anthropomorphism, also called anthropopathism (i.e., not human form or shape but human feelings: love, hate, desire, anger, etc.). Thus, while there are only faint traces of anthropomorphism proper in the Hebrew scriptures (Old Testament), God is described as loving, taking pity, forgiving, being angry and wroth (at sinners and evildoers), and avenging himself upon his enemies. Even when theological thinking progressively divests the deity of the "cruder" forms of physical and mental anthropomorphism, some irreducible elements remain. For example, certain types of theology of history *(Heilsgeschichte)* imply that God "has a plan" for his creation or for mankind. In fact, religion is often expressed in terms of man's duty to serve the achievement of this divine plan and purpose. The ultimate residual anthropomorphism, however, is the theistic notion of God as personal, in contrast to an impersonal conception of the divine. Also, verbal imagery, no matter how metaphorical it is supposed to be, preserves this basic anthropomorphism: God is father, mother, lover, king, shepherd, judge. Verbal and iconic imagery can be very different things even when both are anthropomorphic. Thus Buddhism is an essentially metaphysical religion, yet Buddhist temples (Theravāda no less than Mahāyāna) can be full to the bursting point with anthropomorphic images. Shintō mythology, on the other hand, is as anthropomorphic as can be, but a Shintō shrine (at least if uncontaminated by Buddhist influence) is as empty of statues and images as a mosque or a synagogue.

Another important distinction has to be made between what may be called primary and secondary anthropomorphism. The former reflects a simple, naive, uncritical (or precritical) level of immediate, concrete, "massive," and mythological imagination. The latter is more dogmatic and deliberate. It is fundamentalist in the sense that anthropomorphic assertions are made and defended not because they reflect the immediate level of religious consciousness but because they reflect a dogmatic position: holy scriptures or canonical traditions use anthropological language, hence this language has to be literally accepted and believed in. Many discussions in the history of Muslim theology have to be seen in the light of this distinction.

Theological and Philosophical Implications. A survey of all the instances of anthropomorphism in the world's religions would be tantamount to a survey of the mythologies and religious iconography of the world. This

article will be limited to a brief review of the theological and philosophical implications of anthropomorphism, and even these will be surveyed mainly in the history of Western thought, not because analogous developments are lacking elsewhere, but because in the history of Western thought the problem has been dealt with more systematically and consistently. Western religious history also exhibits a very interesting special case, namely Christianity (cf. the dictum of Hegel cited above), since Christ is considered as more than just another divine *avatāra*, or manifestation, and hence the doctrine of the incarnation poses the problem of anthropology in its widest sense—that is, the doctrine of the nature of man and its relation to the divine—and in a very special way. But even aside from incarnation, the "personalist" element in theistic religion remains, as we have seen, an irreducible anthropomorphism. This situation was well defined by the German Old Testament scholar and theologian Bernhard Duhm when he said that the real problem for biblical religion was how to get rid not of anthropomorphism but "physiomorphism" in its representation of God.

Most religions start with straightforward and naive anthropomorphic ideas of the divine (gods, goddesses) and even in their more highly developed stages do not greatly mind that the simple folk maintain their "primitive" ideas, although the spiritual élite may consider anthropological imagery crude and substitute for it a more sophisticated language. Physical and anthropomorphic imagery is then explained (or explained away) as a symbolic reference to certain qualities of the divine that, in their turn, may later have to be further transcended by an even more spiritual understanding.

Anthropomorphism and the Criticism of Religion. The expression "criticism of religion" has to be understood on several levels. It need not necessarily be atheistic or irreligious. The expression merely signifies that religious representations and statements (whether primitive, popular, traditional, or otherwise normative) are criticized because of their allegedly crude and, at times, immoral character. This criticism can come from the outside—from philosophy, for example—or from inside—that is, when religious consciousness becomes more sophisticated, refined, and self-critical (often under the impact of philosophy from outside). Among the earliest and best-known examples of this tendency is the Greek author Xenophanes (fifth century BCE), of whose writings only fragments have been preserved. He ironically notes that Ethiopians represent the gods as black, Thracians depict them as blue-eyed and red-haired, and "if oxen and horses . . . had hands and could paint," their images of gods would depict oxen and horses. Xenophanes thus anticipates the modern

atheistic inversion of the Old Testament account of creation, to the effect that men create gods in their own image. He also attacks anthropopathism: "Homer and Hesiod attribute to the gods what among men would be considered reprehensible: stealing, adultery, and deceit." Yet Xenophanes was far from irreligious. He speaks of one God "who neither in shape . . . nor in thought" resembles anything human. He has no eyes and no ears, but himself is "wholly eye, wholly spirit, wholly ear."

Plato, too, objects to the all too human conception of the gods. For this reason he would also ban traditional Homeric mythology from his ideal republic, "no matter whether [these stories have] a hidden sense or not" (*Republic* 377–378). But the fact that Plato mentions the possibility of a hidden sense indicates one of the roads that religious thinking and apologetic would take in response to the critical challenge. This critical challenge, it must be reiterated, is not antireligious; it is, rather, a religious trend toward self-purification by purging itself of elements considered to be primitive and crude. The same tendency is in evidence in many parts of the Old Testament, and not only in the second of the Ten Commandments. It gathers strength, under the influence of Hellenistic philosophy, in, for example, the Targums (the Aramaic translations of the Old Testament), which, in their wish to eliminate all anthropomorphism, substitute for Hebrew phrases meaning "and God appeared unto," "God spoke," "God saw," "the hand of God," and so on such alternative phrases as "the glory of God appeared," "the power of God," and the like.

This "first purgation," however, does not solve the problem of mental anthropomorphism. When the sixteenth-century French essayist Montaigne wrote that "we may use words like Power, Truth, Justice, but we cannot conceive the thing itself. . . . None of our qualities can be attributed to the Divine Being without tainting it with our imperfection" (*Essais* 2.12), he merely summed up what Muslim, Jewish, and Christian philosophers had already discussed in the Middle Ages. Their problem, like Montaigne's, was not the objectionable character of physical and of certain moral attributes, but the admissibility of attributes as such. The great twelfth-century Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides (Mosheh ben Maimon), like the Muslim philosophers who had preceded him, taught with uncompromising radicalism that no positive attributes whatever can be predicated of God. It should come as no surprise that most of the efforts of Maimonides, who besides being a great philosopher was also a leading rabbinic authority, should be devoted to explaining away the many anthropomorphisms in the Bible. Once one embarks on this radical road, the next question becomes

inevitable: is not "being" or "existence" also a human concept, and is not the definition of God as pure or absolute being also an anthropromorphism, although perhaps a very rarefied one?

Two main tendencies can be distinguished in response to this challenge. The one leads to a cessation of speech ("mystical silence"); the other to a more sophisticated theology based on an analysis of human consciousness.

Mysticism. The most radical method that religious consciousness can adopt to purge itself of anthropomorphism is the assertion that no adequate statements about the divine are possible in human language. In the West this tradition goes back to the Neoplatonic mystical theologian known as Dionysius the Areopagite (fifth century CE), who introduced into Christian terminology the "hidden godhead" and the "divine darkness." This tradition was transmitted to the Latin West by John Scottus Eriugena (ninth century CE), from whom it passed to Eckhart and the Rhineland mystics and to such English figures as Walter Hilton and the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*, and influenced later mystics (Jakob Boehme, Angelus Silesius) and even nonmystical, "mainline" theologians. Thomas Aquinas gave a place in his system to this *theologia negativa*, and Martin Luther thought highly of the mystical tract known as the *Theologia Deutsch*.

The challenge of anthropomorphism, or to be more precise, the critical reflection as to how to meet this challenge, thus turns out to be an important factor in the development of mysticism. But this radical mystical "purging" of language ultimately links up with agnostic and even nonreligious criticism. The central text in this respect is David Hume's *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* (1779), written in the form of a conversation between three interlocutors: a skeptic, a Christian close to the mystical tradition, and a theist. The Christian mystic asserts that the divine essence, attributes, and manner of existence are a mystery to us. The skeptic agrees, but admits the legitimacy of anthropological attributes (wisdom, thought, intention), because human beings simply do not have at their disposal any other form of expression. He merely warns against the mistake of assuming any similarity between our words and the divine qualities. In other words, the mystical and the skeptical, even agnostic, criticisms of anthropomorphism tend to converge. The theist speaker is not slow to seize on this point. His theism is of a more sophisticated kind; it has absorbed and integrated the antianthropomorphic critique. But if all our ideas about the divine are by definition totally incorrect and misleading, then religion and theology necessarily and automatically cease to be of any interest whatever. A spiritual being of which nothing can be predicated (no will, no emotion, no love) is, in actual fact, no spirit at all. Hume's argument that mysticism (including pantheism) and atheism ultimately converge has had far-reaching influence. Nineteenth-century philosophical atheism took up Hume's argument and used the critique of anthropomorphism as well as the dead end to which it leads as leverage for the shift from theology to anthropology: the essence of God is, in fact, nothing but our projection, on a celestial screen, of the essence of man. Thus concluded, for example, Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872).

Other Attitudes toward Anthropomorphism. Aside from mysticism, Christian thought has responded in two ways to criticisms of anthropomorphism. The traditional, standard form of theistic theology tries on the one hand to purge from religion the kind of anthropomorphism that invites facile criticism and strives on the other hand to avoid the kind of radical "purging" that leads either to mystical silence or to atheism. The alternative is to speak of God, unapologetically and with a certain robust courage, knowing full well that such speech is valid "by analogy" only. The subject is one of the most complex in the history of theology. For the purpose of this article, it must suffice to point to the existence of this middle way, without going into technical details or analyzing the different types of "theology of analogy": analogy of attribution, mainly known in the form of "analogy of being" *(analogia entis)*, a central concept in official Roman Catholic theology; analogy of proportionality; analogy of faith (opposed by the Protestant theologian Karl Barth to the Roman Catholic concept of *analogia entis*); analogy of relation; and so on. The theology of analogy uses a distinction made by the Muslim Aristotelian philospher Ibn Rushd (Averroës) between univocal, equivocal, and analogous predication. The former two were rejected by the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) of the Roman Catholic church, which espoused "analogy."

Another, and typically modern, method of evading the problem of anthropomorphism is the view that holds all religious statements to be statements about *our* religious consciousness. The father of this theory, in the history of Western thought, is the nineteenth-century German Protestant theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher. In the last resort, this view, too, represents a shift from theology to anthropology (as Feuerbach was quick to point out), with the difference that for Schleiermacher this shift serves religious understanding, whereas for Feuerbach it serves the radical critique of religion as such. Schleiermacher's insights are still operative in Rudolf Bultmann's program of "demythologizing" the gospel. According to Bultmann, all state-

ments about God's concrete acts should be interpreted "existentially," except the notion of God acting (i.e., his saving intervention in our existence). The non-Bultmannian will, of course, ask why one should stop short at this particular anthropomorphism. This theology of religious consciousness has been condemned as heretical by both the Roman Catholic church (see the papal encyclical *Pascendi*, 1907) and Protestant orthodoxy (e.g., Karl Barth).

Conclusion. This article, although it focuses on the history of Western thought, is intended to give a coherent picture of the kind of problems generated by anthropomorphism. Similar phenomena, though less systematically elaborated, can be found in other religious traditions, for example, in the Vedantic impersonalist conception of the Absolute, which considers personalist theism and *bhakti* devotion as a lower form of religion. Mahāyāna Buddhism possesses a highly developed anthropomorphic and semianthropomorphic pantheon, but these figures are symbolic images to be transcended on the higher levels of meditation. Altogether, Eastern religions make greater allowance for differences in the levels of religious understanding between different kinds and conditions of men. Some medieval Muslim theologians too advocated the (near-heretical) doctrine of "double truth," reminiscent of the Indian distinction between *saṃvṛti* (conventional truth) and *paramārtha satya* (absolute truth). Similarly, a more simple language and imagery, adapted to the capacities of the less mature and less advanced, is justified by Buddhists as *upāya* ("skillful means" for teaching the truth). Even the Zen Buddhist in his daily practice worships statues of Buddhas and *bodhisattva*s, although theoretically he aspires to absolute nothingness and is taught to "kill the Buddha" if he encounters him as an obstacle on the way. A Hindu analogy would be the distinction between *saguna* and *nirguna* (i.e., the "qualified" versus the "unqualified" Absolute). The Upaniṣadic *neti, neti,* or Nāgārjuna's "eightfold negation" could be adduced as Indian instances of a "negative theology." The religious, as distinct from the philosophical, problem could be summarized in the simple question: can one pray to a nonanthropomorphic deity?

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R. J. ZWI WERBLOWSKY

ANTHROPOSOPHY ("knowledge of man" or "human wisdom") is the name given by Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925), the Austrian philosopher, educator, and spiritual master, to his teaching. Steiner also referred to his teaching as Spiritual Science, thereby signaling what he considered to be the empirical character of his research concerning the spiritual world. In his early years as an author and lecturer on spiritual topics, Steiner was associated with the Theosophical Society, but in 1912, after a disagreement with president of the society Annie Besant concerning her claim that Jiddu Krishnamurti was the reincarnated Christ, Steiner founded the Anthroposophical Society. [*See the biography of Besant.*] As a spiritual movement, Anthroposophy is rooted in the Rosicrucian stream of the Christian esoteric tradition. [*See* Rosicrucians.]

Steiner's clearest explanation of Anthroposophy is to be found in the opening paragraphs of *Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*, which he wrote during the last months of his life:

> 1. Anthroposophy is a path of knowledge, to guide the Spiritual in the human being to the Spiritual in the universe. It arises in man as a need of the heart, of the life of feeling; and it can be justified only inasmuch as it can satisfy this inner need.
> 2. Anthroposophy communicates knowledge that is gained in a spiritual way. . . . For at the very frontier where the knowledge derived from sense-perception ceases, there is opened through the human soul itself the further outlook into the spiritual world.   (Steiner, 1973, p. 13)

From his first systematic work, *Die Philosophie der Freiheit* (1896, translated as *The Philosophy of Freedom*, 1916; and also as *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*, 1922), until his last writings, Steiner sought to exemplify (and enable others to attain) spiritual, or sense-free, knowing. Anthroposophy may be understood as the discipline of seeing the inner, or spiritual, core of every reality, even those realities that seem to be grossly material. Although it is ordinarily understood as a teaching, Anthroposophy is essentially a discipline by which to see directly into the spiritual world. Employing the anthroposophical technique, Steiner was reportedly

able to track the souls of the deceased and to read the "Akasha Record," which can be thought of as a transcript of human and cosmic history available to accomplished psychics and spiritual seers.

It is one of the key claims of Steiner's Spiritual Science that knowledge of the higher, or spiritual, world is made possible by the principle of the self that he refers to as "Spirit," "Ego," or "I." According to Steiner, each of four levels of knowledge corresponds to a level of human nature (though the lowest of the four levels, the sensory, is technically below the level of knowledge). *Sensory perception* is made possible by the physical body; *imaginative knowledge* is made possible by the etheric body; *inspirational knowledge* is made possible by the soul, or astral body; and *intuitive knowledge* (also called *spiritual knowledge*) is made possible by the I, Ego, or Spirit.

One of the reasons why Anthroposophy is difficult to summarize is that Steiner prescribes methods for growth on all four levels of apprehension (or, correspondingly, the four levels of the self). Techniques for the increase of knowledge and the growth of the self include study of natural sciences, projective geometry, sculpture, and painting, as well as speech formation, music, "eurythmy" (a method of disciplined movement to sound), interpersonal relations, experience of scriptures, and religious rituals. Steiner himself worked in these and other areas as a way of showing the varied possibilities for the cultivation of imaginative, inspirational, and intuitive knowledge.

According to Steiner, the supersensible knowledge that lies behind his discoveries and disclosures is a distinctive capacity of the present age—as, earlier, the thinking capacity of the classical Greek philosophers or early Christian thinkers was significantly different from that of more ancient seers, whether the ṛṣis of India, Moses, or Homer. In Steiner's elaborate account of the evolution of consciousness, thinking has evolved in direct relation to the devolution of clairvoyance. Steiner seeks to show that the supersensible mode of perception that he espouses combines conscious thinking with a spiritual or intuitive penetration akin to the clairvoyance characteristic of ancient times. At the center of this double evolution, Steiner sees the descent of the Christ, which made possible a reversal of a downward, materialistic trend in favor of an ascent toward an increasingly free, spiritual mode of thinking.

Although few if any of Steiner's many thousands of followers have attained to the kind of supersensible perception he apparently exhibited, they have nevertheless creatively applied his spiritual discipline and insights. The most conspicuous of the works arising from Steiner's teachings is the Waldorf School movement, pres-

ently the largest nonsectarian independent school system in the world. Steiner's followers, called Anthroposophists, are also responsible for the Camp Hill movement, which consists of villages for children and adults who require special mental and emotional care, farms that use Steiner's "bio-dynamic" method of soil cultivation, and laboratories and studios where innovative work based on Steiner's spiritual, scientific research is performed.

Steiner intended Spiritual Science to supersede religion, but, in response to a request from Protestant pastors and seminarians for help in fostering Christian renewal, he generated the sacramental forms and organizational structure of the Christian Community, a modern church that is not formally part of the Anthroposophical Society but nevertheless lives in the same Johannine esoteric Christian stream and clearly draws its inspiration and much of its teaching from Steiner's spiritual life and revelations.

As a way of advancing each person's cultivation of the path to knowledge of the supersensible, Steiner founded the Anthroposophical Society in 1913, and in 1924 he reestablished it. In 1924 he also established the School of Spiritual Science; the members of this organization commit themselves to representing Anthroposophy, or Steiner's Spiritual Science, in and to the world and to cultivating imagination, inspiration, and intuition in both the supersensible and sensible realms.

[*See also the biography of Steiner.*]

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Steiner's published writings total more than 350 volumes, most of which consist of cycles of lectures. Approximately twenty volumes were written as books, three of which are regarded as essential for an understanding of his thought: *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment* (New York, 1947), *Theosophy*, rev. ed. (New York, 1971), and *Occult Science: An Outline* (London, 1969). Steiner's *Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts: Anthroposophy as a Path of Knowledge—The Michael Mystery* (London, 1973) is his most authoritative description of Anthroposophy, but it assumes a thorough familiarity with his teachings. Background for these and other works by Steiner can be found in Stewart C. Easton's *Man and World in the Light of Anthroposophy* (Spring Valley, N.Y., 1975) and in *The Essential Steiner*, edited by me (New York, 1984).

ROBERT A. McDERMOTT

ANTICHRIST. The final opponent of good, known as Antichrist, has haunted Christianity since its beginnings. With roots in Hellenistic Judaism, and an Islamic echo in the figure of al-Dajjāl, the Antichrist myth has had a potent influence on belief, theology, art, literature, and politics.

The name *Antichrist* occurs in the New Testament only in the Johannine letters (*1 Jn.* 2:18, 2:22, 4:3; *2 Jn.* 7), but the figure of a final enemy appears in several New Testament books. *Second Thessalonians* contains a description of "the rebel, the lost one" who is now "restrained" but who will lead the "great revolt," enthrone himself in the sanctuary of the temple, and be slain by Christ at the Parousia (2:1–12). The apocalyptic discourse found in the synoptic Gospels (*Mk.* 13, *Mt.* 24–25, *Lk.* 21) speaks of the "abomination of desolation" to be set up in the holy place (*Mk.* 13:14, *Mt.* 24:15) and the appearance of false Christs and false prophets (*Mk.* 13:5–6, 13:21–23; *Mt.* 24:4–5, 24:23–24; *Lk.* 21:8). The *Book of Revelation* contains symbolic portrayals of Antichrist figures under the guise of two beasts—one arising from the sea (or abyss) with seven heads and ten horns (11:7, 13:1–10, 17:3–18, 19:19–21), whose number is 666 (13:18), the other coming from the land as the servant of the former monster (13:11–17, 16:13, 19:19–21).

It is evident that the early Christians made use of traditions regarding eschatological opponents that depended upon Jewish apocalyptic and earlier prophetic traditions (e.g., Gog and Magog in *Ez.* 38–39). The *Book of Daniel* is the source for both the "abomination of desolation" (9:27, 11:31, 12:11) and for the beasts described in *Revelation* (7:1–9, 7:15–27). Other Jewish texts contain speculation about an evil angel named Beliar who functions as God's final adversary (e.g., *Testament of Levi* 3.3, 18.2; *Sibylline Oracles* 3.63–3.74). Modern research has uncovered similar concerns about eschatological foes in the Qumran community (e.g., *War Rule* 17.6 and the fragments known as 4 Q 186). Late Jewish apocalyptic seems to be the source of physical descriptions of Antichrist (e.g., *Apocalypse of Elijah* 3.14–3.18) that were also used by Christians. Belief in a final opponent of the Messiah survived in later Judaism in the legendary descriptions of the persecuting king Armilus (e.g., in *Sefer Zerubbabel*).

Various explanations have been given for the origin of Antichrist. Wilhelm Bousset advanced a mythological interpretation that saw Antichrist as a projection into the end time of the monster of chaos who had warred against the creator god in Near Eastern cosmogonies. R. H. Charles argued that Antichrist originated from the interaction of three traditions: individual and collective notions of an eschatological enemy based upon political events, the mythic figure of Beliar, and the growth of the Nero myth.

The evidence indicates that belief in Antichrist arose through the interaction of ancient myths and current political situations. The desecration of the Temple by the Seleucid king Antiochus IV (167 BCE) and his savage persecution of the Jews were shocking events that called out for universalistic interpretations based on archetypal myths (*Dn.* 8:9–14). Subsequent persecutors of Jews and Christians were also given mythological stature, and their stories in turn further shaped the mythic narratives. The most important of these persecutors was the Roman emperor Nero (54–68). Building on the confusion surrounding the death of Nero, legends about a returning (or later resurrected) Nero who would function as an ultimate enemy influenced contemporary Christian and Jewish texts (e.g., *Rv.* 13, 17; *Ascension of Isaiah* 4.1–4.4; *Sibylline Oracles* 3.63–3.74, 4.119–4.150, 5). Another historical figure whose legendary history became intertwined with Antichrist was Simon Magus (*Acts* 8:9–13).

Christian thinkers of the second and third centuries tried to weave the diverse traditions concerning Antichrist into a coherent picture. Was he to be one or many? A human person or a demon? Jewish or Roman in origin? A false teacher (a pseudomessiah) or an imperial persecutor? One motive behind the emergence of detailed accounts of the final opponent was the development of Christology. Speculation on the person and prerogatives of Christ encouraged attention to his eschatological opposite. In the early third century, Hippolytus of Rome wrote a treatise, *On Christ and the Antichrist*, that gave a handy summary of belief and legend. Some of his successors (e.g., Commodianus, Lactantius, Sulpicius Severus) deal with the variety of traditions about Antichrist by distinguishing between two final enemies: a Roman persecutor, for which Nero was the prototype, and a false Jewish messiah born of the tribe of Dan who would rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem.

Antichrist myths continued to flourish after the conversion of the Roman empire to Christianity. Building upon the description of many Antichrists in the New Testament letters of John, the Donatist exegete Tyconius (d. 390?) stressed a moralizing view of the final enemy as the aggregate body of evildoers within the church. Corporate views of the Antichrist, including those that focused on heretics, Muslims, or Jews, were common in the Middle Ages, but evil individuals within or without Christianity were still often identified with Antichrist or his immediate predecessor.

Christian beliefs about Antichrist, especially those originating in Syria, were the source for Islamic legends regarding a final eschatological foe, called al-Dajjāl ("the deceiver"). Although al-Dajjāl does not appear in the Qur'ān, traditions appeared early concerning this monstrous figure who was to be manifested shortly before the end, lead the faithful astray, and be slain either by Jesus or by the Mahdi.

The Christian monk Adso's *Letter on the Antichrist* (c. 950), written on the model of a saint's life, depicts the final enemy as a combination of both a pseudo-Christ and a persecuting tyrant, a depiction that was to remain standard in Latin Christianity for centuries. The twelfth-century renewal of apocalyptic thought was rich in speculation on Antichrist. In Germany, the first and greatest of the medieval Antichrist dramas, *Ludus de Antichristo*, appeared, while in Italy, Joachim of Fiore (d. 1202) wove both corporate and individual views of Antichrist together into his new apocalyptic schema.

In the later Middle Ages, the view of Adso, passed on by writers such as Hugh of Strassburg, Hugh of New-castle, and John of Paris, remained popular and in the fifteenth century was illustrated in a remarkable series of block books. The Joachite tradition looked forward to a struggle between one or more spiritual popes *(pastores angelici)*, who would try to reform the church, and their opponents, evil popes introduced by force or schism who were identified with Antichrist or his predecessors. In Peter Olivi's Franciscan Joachitism, there are dual final Antichrists: the papal *Antichristus mysticus* and the *Antichristus magnus*, a persecuting emperor (some-times identified with a reborn Frederick II). Fueled by the Avignon papacy, the schism of 1378–1417, and the general failure of the papacy to reform the church, such beliefs were widespread in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. John Wyclif and the Hussites sharpened the identification of the papacy with Antichrist. It is no sur-prise that Martin Luther and other reformers seized upon Antichrist rhetoric in their battle against Rome.

Reformation identification of the papacy with An-tichrist (e.g., Smalcaldic Articles 2.4) went beyond most late medieval views in its total rejection of the papal office and in its insistence upon a renewed corporate interpretation that identified the institution of the pa-pacy, and not individual popes, with Antichrist. Some reformers also held double-Antichrist views coupling the Turks with the papacy. The strength of the corpo-rate view may have been the source of the widening of Antichrist rhetoric that marked the sixteenth- and sev-enteenth-century Reformation debates, especially in England, where *Antichrist* became a term of opprob-rium that could be used against any institution or group.

It is tempting to think that this inflation of rhetoric, together with Enlightenment criticism of religion, sti-fled belief in Antichrist, but the last enemy's ability to serve as a symbol of evil has given the figure a singular longevity. Historical figures, like Napoleon I and Adolf Hitler, have been seen as Antichrist, as have such move-ments as the French Revolution, socialism, and com-munism. Friedrich Nietzsche's adoption of the role of Antichrist and his use of the title for his most violent attack on Christianity and bourgeois morality are well known. No less significant are the uses of the myth by some of the major Russian writers of the nineteenth century, such as Fedor Dostoevskii, Vladimir Solov'ev, and Dmitrii Merezhkovskii. Belief in an individual final Antichrist continues in popular culture, but for many Christians the Antichrist has become a symbol of the evil in the human heart.

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BERNARD MCGINN

ANTI-SEMITISM. The term *anti-Semitism* was coined in 1879 by the German agitator Wilhelm Marr, author of the anti-Jewish *Der Sieg des Judenthums über das Germanthum,* a work with a gloomy view of the Germanic future. Marr himself was antireligious as well as anti-Jewish, and his term arose out of the pseudosci-ence of the modern era that regarded race rather than religion as the decisive factor separating Jews from Ger-mans. For this reason, racist anti-Semitism is usually distinguished from medieval Christian anti-Semitism and its antecedents in the patristic and New Testament periods, in which the religious element was paramount. Scholars are divided over the question of continuity and discontinuity between past and present. For James Parkes (1934), Jules Isaac (1959), and Rosemary Rad-ford Ruether (1974), the true roots of even secular anti-Christian forms of hatred of Jews in the contemporary world lie in Christianity and its classical theological formulations: the old *adversus Judaeos* tradition. For Hannah Arendt (1951), on the other hand, the hiatus be-tween the late Middle Ages and the modern age as far as the Jews are concerned is simply too pronounced to permit this conclusion. The debate remains unresolved

partly because the two sides attach a different significance to the evidence and partly because they do not agree about the relative influence of religious and nonreligious factors in history.

Even Arendt, however, does not cut off the past completely, and it is not possible to discuss the subject properly without examining its Christian background. While anti-Jewish hostility existed in pre-Christian times, notably in ancient Alexandria where local tensions led to the propagation of many anti-Jewish slanders, anti-Judaism was never part of pagan religion as such. It was, rather, a concomitant of ancient ethnocentrism with its proud conviction of Greek (and later Roman) superiority. Judaism was seen as tribalistic, and Jews who resisted the benefits of enlightenment were considered to be filled with enmity toward the human race. Only when Christianity was born as a separatist movement within the Jewish world and became locked in conflict with its rabbinic rival did religious anti-Judaism arise in history. This anti-Judaism found expression in the early literature of the church both within and without the New Testament. Later, it became embedded in the theology and piety of Christendom, where it developed and was embellished by the inclusion of extra-Christian themes. With the birth in the seventh century of Islam, a religion much influenced by Jewish and Christian ideas, certain anti-Jewish motifs borrowed from Christianity were transferred to a new context. The anti-Jewish elements in Christian and Muslim literature must be examined in turn.

Anti-Judaism in the New Testament. Today, even Christian scholars generally concede that the Gospels and other sections of the New Testament are colored in some measure by hostility toward the Jewish antagonists of the apostolic church in the troubled milieu of the first and second centuries, although the exact nature of this hostility is still under investigation. The *Gospel of Mark*, a work addressed to a Roman gentile audience, reveals an apparent apologetic shift from Roman to Jewish responsibility for the execution of Jesus, possibly because the redactor did not wish to present Jesus as a Jewish insurrectionist at a time when Jews were highly unpopular in Rome as a result of the Judean War (66–70 CE). Thus, a reluctant Pilate allows a Jewish council and a Jewish rabble to force his hand. The *Gospel of Matthew* embroiders this theme, portraying the death of Jesus as largely a Jewish deed for which the instigators acknowledge their guilt with a self-inflicted curse: "His blood be on us, and on our children!" (*Mt.* 27:25). This verse, notorious in later Christendom as a proof text for Jewish malediction, has been grossly abused throughout history. Rather than a cosmic sentence visited on all Jews until the end of time, it represents the redactor's feeling that the recent devastation inflicted on Judaea by the Romans was the fruit of Israel's complicity in the crucifixion of Jesus and its subsequent persecution of Christian missionaries. Douglas R. A. Hare has developed this thesis in *The Theme of Jewish Persecution of Christians in Saint Matthew* (Cambridge, 1967).

As a postwar composition, the *Gospel of Matthew* seems to reflect the harsh atmosphere of judgment and recrimination characteristic of such eras. Given the redactor's hostile stance, it is not surprising that the Matthaean Jesus is made to hurl angry denunciations at his Pharisaic opponents, obviously the redactor's own Jamnia contemporaries as well as the contemporaries of Jesus himself. From this diatribe (*Mt.* 23) emerges the composite image, so deeply encased in the Christian imagination, of the hypocritical, legalistic, impious, blind, fanatical, and murderous Pharisee, an image that has played havoc with Jewish-Christian relations ever since. It is, of course, a caricature, as scholarship now recognizes, and must be seen as such. Even in milder form, however, the image remains a problem.

Luke and *Acts*, two works of gentile authorship, reinforce the view that the Jewish populace was responsible for the death of Jesus and that the later destruction of Jerusalem was a consequence of God's wrath. As Hare points out, however, although these anti-Jewish themes are present in *Luke* and *Acts*, their impact is softened by other passages, perhaps because Luke hoped for missionary success among Diaspora Jews (Hare, in Davies, 1979). Not only do the Jewish crowds beat their breasts in remorse (*Lk.* 23:48), but the expiring Jesus himself exonerates them, "Father, forgive them, they do not know what they are doing" (*Lk.* 23:34). Furthermore, throughout the work the impression is conveyed that the entire crucifixion drama was predestined in any case, and that its actors had no choice. "Herod and Pontius Pilate conspired with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel to do all the things which, under thy hand and by thy decree, were foreordained" (*Acts* 4:28). Hence, a less harsh note prevails.

The *Gospel of John*, a complex and highly stylized composition, casts the Jews in a profoundly hostile light as symbols of a "fallen universe of darkness" who oppose Jesus at every turn in the great drama of the Messiah's "hour" when the Messiah manifests his glory. According to John, they are the children of the devil, that murderer and "father of lies," and they elect to carry out their father's desires (*Jn.* 8:44–46). Naturally, they conspire against the Messiah, the spokesman of God's truth, and seek his death. So negative and intense is the Johannine image that John has sometimes been regarded as the "father of anti-Semitism." Because of its

deceptively simple character and the great religious power of its language, this gospel has long been the favorite text of Christian piety, conditioning Christians to think almost instinctively in anti-Jewish terms. It is well known that Holy Week, when the passion of Jesus is relived in the liturgy, usually in its Johannine form, was a particularly dangerous time for Jews during the Middle Ages. But this ancient book should not be read as if it had been written amid the anguish of medieval Jewry, much less amid the twentieth-century Holocaust; it should be read and evaluated in its own historical context—as written at Ephesus (as most scholars believe) at the close of the first century.

If this setting is correct, the dualistic imagery of the book, with its radical contrast between truth and error, goodness and evil, light and darkness, is understandable when seen in the context of a small Christian community that must have felt powerless in the shadow of the mighty pagan and larger Jewish worlds. Interestingly, for all his anti-Judaism, John, unlike Matthew, makes it clear that Jesus died as a Roman political prisoner rather than as the victim of a Jewish murder; the Jews, to be sure, are involved, but for political as well as religious reasons. Jewish actions are meant to prevent Roman military intervention (*Jn.* 11:47–50), and even as such they are the initiatives of a puppet government lacking in popular support and obsessed with its own survival. Moreover, John views neither Jews nor Judaism with uniform hostility. Jesus, addressed throughout John's gospel as "rabbi," is explicitly identified as a Jew by the woman at the well of Samaria (*Jn.* 4:9), and the gospel itself rests on the claim that salvation comes from the Jews (*Jn.* 4:22). This Jewish accent, reinforced by the redactor's familiarity with Jewish festivals and religious lore together with his defense of such Jewish ideas as the goodness of the material realm over against the gnostic depreciation of matter, suggests origins consistent with a Jewish sectarianism not unlike that of the Qumran community of the Dead Sea Scrolls. In this light, the antagonism between Jesus and Caiaphas resembles the antagonism between the (Qumran) Teacher of Righteousness and the Wicked Priest, or the struggle between faithful and apostate Israel. Like the high priest himself, the Johannine "Jews" represent not Jews in general but the Jewish religious establishment that holds power over other Jews and prevents them from recognizing the true Messiah. In John's time, church and synagogue had taken the decisive step toward final separation, with the former accusing the latter of spiritual blindness and the latter accusing the former of spiritual apostasy. (The Birkat ha-Minim, a prayer for the extirpation of heretics and Christians, was attached to the synagogue liturgy by the Council of Jamnia.) John thus conflates the anti-Jesus Sadducees and Pharisees of the past with the rabbinic rulers of his own day, his personal enemies in Ephesus itself. In *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (New York, 1968), J. Louis Martyn has made the ingenious suggestion that the Johannine narrative of the passion of Jesus is really a hidden account of the arrest and trial of Christian missionaries by local Jewish authorities during the career of the evangelist, and perhaps this is so.

The religious roots of anti-Semitism can also be traced to Paul, sometimes seen as a fanatical convert whose polemic against the Law (*Gal.*, *Rom.*), coupled with his charge that a veil has descended over Jewish minds (*2 Cor.*), has made him seem an archenemy of Judaism. Ruether (1974) argues that Paul, under gnostic influence, conceived of the Torah as a means of demonic rulership over the fleshly man of the dying age, whereas freedom from the Torah signifies freedom from the evil powers for the spiritual man of the coming age. Thus Judaism, or the Israel of flesh, is superseded by Christianity, the Israel of spirit. Although Paul speaks warmly of the Jews, whose covenant remains intact, and of the Torah as "holy, just and good" (*Rom.* 7:12), he nevertheless focuses, in chapters 9–11, on the fact of Jewish disbelief. This, according to Eliezer Berkovits, in *Faith after the Holocaust* (New York, 1973), causes Christians to regard Jews in a negative light as disbelievers: a false and offensive image that never allows Judaism to define itself in positive terms as an authentic biblical faith. Instead, Jewish existence is subsumed under Christian categories. If Paul is merely opening the door to eventual salvation for the Jews in Christian eschatology, that is, to their conversion at the end time, is he not really contributing to their theological denigration?

The true character of the apostle's apparent rejection of the Torah remains unresolved in New Testament scholarship. H. J. Schoeps, writing in *Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History* (Philadelphia, 1961), suggests that Paul, as a Diaspora Jew, followed the "ominous" Diaspora tendency to reduce the significance of the Torah by detaching it from the covenant where it rightfully belongs. Misunderstanding its real nature, therefore, Paul could easily conclude that righteousness was attainable apart from the Torah, just as Abraham was considered righteous because of his faith before the Torah was given. In *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia, 1976), Krister Stendahl, on the other hand, argues that Pauline interpretation has been bedeviled by the intrusion of the "introspective conscience" of later Western Christians such as Martin Luther, who read their own inner anguish

drove the former into what, in certain ways, was a worse anti-Judaism of his own. Tertullian's successor, Cyprian, bishop of Carthage in the third century, cataloged the now standard anti-Jewish testimonies and proof texts in a special collection, *To Quirinius*.

It was left, however, to the great fourth-century preacher John Chrysostom to immortalize Christian anti-Jewish animosity at its fever pitch in his notorious sermons at Antioch (386–387). The inspiration for the sermons was a tendency among Christians to attend local Jewish festivals, thereby contracting the "disease" of Judaism. A rivalry between Antiochene Jews and Christians for economic and political advantage, combined with Christian resentment of recent Jewish support for the apostate emperor Julian, exacerbated the situation. Chrysostom spares the Jews nothing: they have been driven to utter depravity by gluttony and drunkenness; they are like animals fit only for slaughter; their synagogue is a theater, a whorehouse, a "den of thieves," a "haunt of wild animals," and a "dwelling place of demons"; Christians who enter its doors are no better than "asses." Jewish possession of the scriptures makes their disbelief even more wicked; indeed, they are worse than pagans because they sacrifice the "souls of men" on an invisible "altar of deception." Moreover, they sacrifice their own children to demons, "disregarding nature, forgetting the pangs of birth . . . and becoming more savage than all the wild beasts." As a consequence, "God hates them" (Sermon 1: "Dangers Ahead"). The modern reader, even allowing for the anxieties of an insecure church, has difficulty excusing Chrysostom for these excesses. His sermons contain more than theological anti-Judaism; they illustrate the fusion of theology with myth and a growing obsession with the Jews as agents of the mythic powers of evil.

Chrysostom's great Western contemporary Augustine breathed a softer personal note—Christians, in his view, should love the Jews and seek their conversion—but his theology sounded an even harsher chord. Like Hippolytus earlier, he emphasized Jewish malediction: "Let their eyes be darkened that they see not and their back bend thou down always" (*Answer to the Jews*, c. 428). He wrote also of the Jews' Cain-like existence as creatures who, after their biblical prototype, are bound to the material world (*Reply to Faustus the Manichaean*, 397). As symbols of divine wrath, they serve as negative witnesses to the Christian faith, working as slave-librarians to preserve the sacred books they cannot read. This symbolism, however, was double-edged: Cain was also under God's protection, and the curse could be invoked by the medieval papacy as a warning against mob violence and a reminder to Christians that the fate of the Jews was in the hands of God alone. But it effectively kept Jewry in a dangerous religious twilight as far as Christendom was concerned: one could not be Cain, the murderer of Abel, who foreshadowed Christ, without provoking Christian hostility and perhaps an urge to reinforce the divine decree. Thus Augustine's legacy proved fateful for the Jews in Western society.

Developments during the Middle Ages and the Reformation. The long history of the Jewish-Christian encounter, including the ongoing incorporation of Christian prejudice into the legal, social, ecclesiastical, and political institutions of the Christian world, from the age of Constantine until the age of emancipation, is outside the limits of this article. However, certain important developments, especially in the medieval period when religious images seeped into the popular mind, cannot be passed over without mention. Frequent attention has been drawn to the gradual demonization of the Jews in art and folklore, notably in the late Middle Ages. The myths of Jewish crimes such as ritual murder, desecration of the Host, and conspiracy against Christendom intensified the imagined association of Jews with the Prince of Darkness. This process was not uniform across Europe, but became pronounced in northern Europe as it sank into a state of social crisis colored by religious anxiety after the thirteenth century, when preoccupation with the supernatural was strong. As Norman Cohn reminds us in *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Europe's Inner Demons* (New York, 1970), Catholics and heretics demonized not only each other but also the real or fictional secret societies (e.g., Templars, witches, and Jews) on whom the ills of the time might be blamed. To many Christian sectarians, anticipating a violent climax to history, the Antichrist would prove to be a Jew. Not only sectarians, however, but—if Jeremy Cohen (1982) is correct—also the great religious orders founded in the thirteenth century, the Dominicans and the Franciscans, contributed to the demonization of the Jews by attacking the Talmud as a blasphemous and evil writing that stood between the Jews and their conversion. In addition, the peculiar economic roles forced on the Jewish community by feudal society placed its members under a new stigma. As hucksters and usurers, the latter were not only Cain, who murdered Abel (Christ), but also Judas, who sold Christ for thirty pieces of silver. From this fusion of economic and religious symbols arose the deadly image of the ruthless and rapacious Jew, still an intrinsic part of *antisemitica* today. Werner Sombart exploited this image in his account of the origins of modern capitalism, *Die Juden und das Wirtschaftleben* (Leipzig, 1911), claiming that the thirst for profit was rooted in Jewish materialism and rationalism: both capitalism and Judaism, in his view, are "alien unnatural elements" in

the social order. Here, the German economist was simply drawing on medieval conceptions.

The religious and folkloric anti-Judaism of the late Middle Ages came to a boil in the intemperate writings of the old Martin Luther, especially his 1543 tract *On the Jews and Their Lies*. Ironically, an evangelical emphasis on the transparency of the word of God to anyone who searched the scriptures betrayed Luther into a distinctively Protestant form of anti-Semitism. How could the rabbis, who knew the text as well as Luther, not perceive its plain message? They must perceive it, and therefore must be consciously lying when they deny the messiahship of Jesus. "We are certain that even the devil and the Jews themselves cannot refute this in their hearts, and that in their consciences they are convinced." His belief that Christ had been insulted, together with his conviction (stimulated by the Jewish apostate Antonias Margaritha) that Judaism was an evil religion, and further his abhorrence of religious legalism and his disappointment at the Jewish failure to convert to the reformed faith, drove Luther into an anti-Jewish fury so unrestrained that he has since been compared to Hitler. However, unlike Hitler, Luther was no racist, and his anger at the Jews, as Heiko Oberman (1984) has emphasized, was intimately connected with his anger at both the Roman papacy and the Turks, whom the reformer also saw as the devil's storm troops in a final assault on the church during the end time. Moreover, Luther's savage recommendations—the burning of synagogues and the suppression of Jewish worship and teaching—seem to have been motivated by his belief that Jewish "blasphemy" was an active menace in Christian society. The rediscovery of his anti-Jewish works during the renaissance of Luther studies in 1918 coincided with a rebirth of German nationalism, and this fact assisted his transformation into a Germanic hero and greatly distorted his true character. Significantly, Luther's Protestant contemporaries held a poor opinion of his tract; Bucer commented that it sounded like the composition of a swineherd rather than that of a "renowned shepherd of the soul." Yet it cannot be denied that such abuse of the Jews cast a dark shadow over European Christianity, making matters easy for the anti-Semites of the twentieth century.

Modern Anti-Semitism. Although Christian belief was slowly eroded by the rise of secularism and modernity, negative images of Jews were too deeply embedded in the cultural substratum to disappear easily from the European consciousness. Rather, they persisted even among the Enlightenment critics of religion, as the case of Voltaire clearly shows. Within the churches, moreover, neither post-Tridentine Catholicism nor post-Reformation Protestantism was disposed to reconsider

traditional ideas about Jews and Judaism until the ravages of modern totalitarianism made this morally urgent. A new liberal mood in Protestant thought at the end of the eighteenth century softened orthodox doctrine: Friedrich Schleiermacher, for example, in *The Christian Faith* (1821), recognized Judaism as an authentic religion, even if inferior to Christianity because of its "lingering affinity" with fetishism. But classical prejudice remained. Not even the liberals were immune to nationalism and racism; as Albert Schweitzer remarked in *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (London, 1910) concerning German New Testament studies, "a secret struggle to reconcile the Germanic religious spirit with the Spirit of Jesus of Nazareth" had captured scholarship itself. As early as J. G. Fichte (1762–1814), a refusal to believe that Jesus was a Jew because of the supposedly materialistic character of Talmudic Judaism was becoming evident. Even the ex-Catholic Ernest Renan in his *Life of Jesus* (Paris, 1863) could only make sense of his hero by describing him as too great to be possessed by an inferior Semitic spirit. In this fashion, the old malevolence survived in new forms, finally with infamous results.

Today, after Auschwitz, a reverse tendency has appeared, as Christians, stricken by Jewish suffering, have begun to reexamine their tradition in light of recent history. Except where anti-Jewish sentiments still linger, one detects a growing consensus that everything possible should be done to rid Christian theology and piety of their ancient contamination. Bernhard Olson, Paul Démann, John T. Pawlikowski, Claire Huchet Bishop, and Eugene Fischer have sought to uncover and to eliminate all traces of anti-Semitism from church teaching manuals and popular materials, especially those read by children. Besides the expurgation of offensive images, a number of Christian theologians have attempted a deeper criticism and reconstruction of classical doctrines of Christ, election, covenant, and church that contain anti-Jewish overtones. The work of James Parkes, A. Roy Eckardt, Rosemary Ruether, J. Coert Rylaarsdam, Paul Van Buren, John T. Pawlikowski, and others falls into this category. On another level, the various official assemblies of the Christian communions have taken up the question of anti-Semitism and its implications for Jewish-Christian relations, notably the Second Vatican Council, the World Council of Churches, and certain denominational bodies. Many of these documents are summarized in Michael McGarry's *Christology after Auschwitz* (New York, 1967). It cannot be said, however, that the Christian community has fully accepted its moral responsibility in the post-Holocaust world, or resolved the many theological, social, and human problems that this responsibility entails.

Anti-Judaism in Islam. Anti-Semitism in the Muslim world appears in considerable measure to have stemmed from the infiltration of Christian and Western influences, since the religious basis for anti-Judaism in Islam is smaller than in Christianity, which has the deicide motif. Even the hostile Qur'anic passages echo Christian opinions. Earlier, in pre-Islamic Arabia, such doctrines as Israel's rejection and punishment by God had been propagated by local Christian communities (Poliakov, 1955–1961); not surprisingly, similar sentiments found their way into the Qur'ān: "Because of their iniquity, we forbade the Jews good things which were formerly allowed them . . . because they practice usury . . . and cheat others of their possessions" (surah 4:160–161). Also, one finds the familiar patristic distinction between biblical Hebrews and postbiblical Jews, whose mode of interpreting scripture was highly suspect. Abraham is not regarded as a Jew but as the first Muslim: "Surely the men who are nearest to Abraham are those who follow him, this Prophet, and the true believers. . . . Some of the People of the Book wish to mislead you; but they mislead none but themselves, though they may not perceive it" (surah 3:67–68). Furthermore, the Jews on occasion are portrayed in Christian fashion as blind and deaf to the truth, and even murderous toward its messengers (including Muḥammad himself): "We made a covenant with the Israelites and sent forth apostles among them. But whenever an apostle came to them with a message that did not suit their fancies they either rejected him or slew him. They thought no harm would come to them: they were blind and deaf. God turned to them in mercy, but many of them again became blind and deaf" (surah 5:70–71). Because of these evil deeds and their disbelief, the Jews have suffered and continue to suffer chastisement on earth as the objects of God's anger: "Ignominy shall attend them wherever they are found, unless they make a covenant with God or with man. They have incurred the wrath of God and have been utterly humbled" (surah 3:112). While some Jews are righteous and in God's favor, God has nonetheless decreed their persecution from the time of Moses until the end of time: "Then your Lord declared that He would raise against them others who would oppress them cruelly till the Day of Resurrection" (surah 7:167).

These hostile verses do not typify the whole of the Qur'ān, which also praises the Jews as the "children of Israel." Since Islam conceives of itself as the final revelation, it was natural for Muḥammad to attribute to both the Hebrew prophets and Jesus the expectation of his own advent and hence to interpret the failure of Jews and Christians to accept this claim as the result of infidelity to God's word. In particular, the refusal of the Arabian Jews to recognize him as the final prophet, especially during an era when Jewish messianic hopes were stirring, must have been baffling and frustrating, and doubtless helps to account for the angry note illustrated above. (Muslim anger was also rooted in the feeling that local Jews were disloyal during the siege of Medina.) One is reminded of Luther's rage regarding the Jewish refusal to convert to Protestant Christianity. Such a refusal was inexplicable except on the basis of deliberate untruth. "Had the People of the Book accepted Islam, it would have surely been better for them. Few of them are true believers, and most of them are evildoers" (surah 3:110). Muḥammad was even moved as a consequence of his rejection to abandon certain Jewish customs, for example, Saturday as the Muslim holy day and Jerusalem as the Muslim holy city. Still, the Qur'ān also contains many less harsh judgments, the product of the Prophet's more benign and tolerant moods and perhaps reflective of the essential spirit of Islam.

Like Christendom, which influenced Muslim society until the Crusades greatly diminished both Christian prestige and the Christian presence in the Muslim world, Islam developed rules for the protection and abasement of its Jewish (and other) subjects, including the wearing of a yellow badge as a means of public identification. This, however, lacked the pejorative connotation that it later acquired in the West, especially during Nazidom. It is generally conceded that, barring certain periods such as the reign of the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥakim (eleventh century), the Jews dwelt more securely under Muslim than under Christian rule, and they were never demonized by Muslims as they were by Christians, at least until the modern era. On the folkloric level, judging from images of the Jews in the *Thousand and One Nights* and other popular literature, no special malice is evident, as ignoble Jewish characters are intermingled with virtuous ones. Indeed, some of these tales seem to have Jewish origins, and Muslim *ḥadīth*s developed with Talmudic models in mind, molding the legal system of the newer religion in the likeness of the older.

Only in recent times, when the shadow of Western anti-Semitism has descended on a Middle East unsettled by the Arab-Israeli conflict, has a fundamentalist tendency to demonize Jews and Judaism crept into Islam. The contemporary crisis of modernity in Muslim society has not been salutary for Western-Muslim relations, and Western (Christian?) support for the presence of a Jewish state on what is regarded as Islamic territory has greatly acerbated this crisis. In this context, some Muslim theologians have exploited the hostile side of their tradition in order to vilify Jews in the most

unqualified terms. The papers published by the Fourth Conference of the Academy of Islamic Research at al-Azhar University (Cairo, 1968) contain a series of extreme anti-Jewish slanders rivaling the worst utterances of the West. As these are all based on Qur'anic texts, they demonstrate the extent to which the latter can be read in an ideological manner. A single quotation from these papers (pp. 38–39) is sufficient:

> This is our enemy, and the disease that plagued our lands. According to the descriptions provided of the Jews in the Quran, they stand as an enemy which is devoid of any human feelings. They are rather a pest or a plague that is cursed like Satan who was expelled by God from the realm of His mercy. This enemy is also sent out to launch war on people exactly like Satan. . . . The presence of the Jews in this part of the world was motivated by the fact that it was the only area in the world that remained steadfast before atheism and heathenism which was spread by the Jews all over the world. . . . In the same way that the devil, rallied by his supporters, is weak and fragile before the force of faith (the cunning of the devil is weak) so are the Jews who may now appear strong by virtue of the support of imperialism. In fact they are weaker than the devil and inferior to him in cunning in the face of the faithful people who adhere to religion. . . .
>
> ('Abd al-Sattar al-Sayyid, mufti of Tarsus, Syria)

[*For further discussion of Christian perspectives on Judaism, see* Christianity and Judaism. *See also* Polemics, *articles on* Jewish-Christian Polemics *and* Muslim-Jewish Polemics.]

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ALAN DAVIES

ANUBIS. The Egyptians represented the god Anubis as a black jackal (a wild dog?) crouching "on his belly," or as a man with a jackal's or dog's head. *Anubis* is the Greek form of his Egyptian name, *Anpu*; the meaning of the latter is uncertain. The cult of Anubis originated in Middle Egypt, in the seventeenth province (nome), where his worship was centered. The province's town of Hardai, which had a dog cemetery in its environs, was called Kunopolis (Cynopolis) by the Greeks. But the cult was spread all over the country.

Anubis is one of the oldest funerary deities. Originally a destroyer of corpses, he was reshaped by theologians as the embalmer of gods and men. To Anubis was entrusted the mummification of Osiris (the ruler of the dead) and his followers, and the guardianship of their burials. Later Egyptian texts referred to Anubis as the son of Osiris—the product of a relationship between Osiris and his sister Nephthys.

In funeral ceremonies, the role of Anubis as promoter of the revival of the dead was performed by a priest-embalmer. Thus their earlier enemy had become their

powerful ally. During the New Kingdom and later periods, a figure of the recumbent god usually appeared atop the "mystery chests" containing the prepared viscera of the dead. In this way Anubis, "he who is over the mystery," fulfilled his duty as keeper of the internal organs that he had resuscitated.

Anubis tended not only the physical well-being of the dead but their moral nature as well. He played a prominent part in the judgment hall of the hereafter. As "magistrate of the court" he examined the deceased, whom he permitted to leave the hall if the outcome was satisfactory. He continued to be the "conductor of souls" (Gr., *psuchopompos*) in the cult and mysteries of Isis during Hellenistic and Roman times. Anubis was closely associated with the pharaoh, not only after his death but at his birth as well.

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M. HEERMA VAN VOSS

ANUM. *See* An.

APACHE RELIGION. There are six separate Apache tribes of the American Southwest: the Chiricahua, Jicarilla, Kiowa Apache, Lipan, Mescalero, and Western Apache. These tribes ranged over a substantial part of eastern Arizona, much of New Mexico, and sections of northern Mexico adjoining these states, as well as southeastern Colorado, western Oklahoma, and western, central, and southern Texas. The extent of Apache territory meant that some tribes were not in contact with others and that at the peripheries there might be frequent interaction with outside groups. Inevitably variation and differential borrowing occurred, which affected not only material culture but concepts as well. Thus only the Kiowa Apache participated in an annual Sun Dance, and only the Jicarilla perform an annual ceremonial relay race, probably inspired by eastern Pueblo examples. All except the Kiowa Apache mark a

girl's pubescence by a complex ceremony; none but the Jicarilla has a boy associated with the girl in this event.

Nevertheless, a common core remains that identifies Apache religion. Prominent in this nucleus is the concept of supernatural power that pervades the universe and with which man can form a working relationship. This power manifests itself through divine beings of Apache legend, celestial bodies, living creatures, and familiar geographical features; there is little in man's world that is not potentially suffused with spiritual meaning. Sometime during his life a person is certain to require the protection that such power can give; power, too, is unfulfilled if it remains dormant. Consequently, although it is often man who seeks a power experience, frequently supernatural power sees man's need and proffers its services. In either case, the outcome is a vision experience in which a person is offered a ceremony, told of its uses, and given necessary directions.

Usually the power source first appears as an animal or heavenly body, changes to human guise, and leads the beholder to some sacred spot. There instruction proceeds if the individual man or woman is willing to accept the rite. The student learns the purposes of the ceremony and what ritual items to require initially from his clients. These gifts are actually offerings to power and may be turquoise, coral, small bags of pollen, or unblemished buckskin.

The recruit is taught the appropriate prayers and songs and what ceremonial articles to manipulate. He may learn that by means of this ceremony he will be able to see an object that is sickening a patient and to "suck it out." He is given to understand that the ceremony exists mainly to ensure supernatural presence and help; without these, nothing can be accomplished. Power exerts itself when its earthly messenger is strong in belief and meticulous in carrying out directions. If his faith should waver, power will withdraw its support. Shamanism is the designation given to ceremonies that are individual in origin and dependent on constant interaction between the practitioner and the particular power. However, Apache religion also includes another kind of ritual, over which priests officiate.

Although obtaining a shamanic ceremony is a personal matter, and although power stems from many sources, this type of ritual is highly patterned. Four is the sacred number: songs and prayers usually occur in sets of four, and four ritual feints accompany the drinking of "medicine." The ceremonial circuit is clockwise, beginning with the east. There is a color-directional tie: ordinarily, black with east, blue with south, yellow with west, and white with north. The inventory of objects used for offerings to power is limited. Besides those al-

ready mentioned, they include eagle feathers, black flint blades, obsidian, specular iron ore, grama grass, red and yellow ocher, pieces of abalone shell, tobacco, and white clay. Rites normally begin at dark and continue until dawn for four successive nights. The procedures and symbols described thus far are present in priestly as well as shamanic ritual and unify Apache ceremonialism. In shamanism, however, the role of supernatural power is constantly remembered; for instance, the practitioner may introduce the rite by recounting the tale of its acquisition. Outsiders who witness an Apache shaman's legerdemain mistakenly cry fraud; the Apache understand that what they see is merely a dramatization of the interplay of invisible forces.

Some ceremonies may be held to find lost objects; others, to locate enemies or even to sway the affections of a member of the opposite sex. There are rituals, in which masked dancers play a prominent part, to ward off epidemics. More common are rites conducted over ailing people. The causes of illness are various: the supernaturals may be affronted; contact, often inadvertent, with an "unclean" animal or bird (particularly the bear, snake, owl, or coyote) may sicken a person; even to cross the tracks of such creatures may precipitate disaster; sickness can occur if one stands too near a place where lightning strikes.

Many of the maladies with which beneficent ceremonialists contend are not accidental. There is evil as well as good in the world. Some envious or vengeful people perform ceremonies to cause ailments. Power, too, has a dual nature. In fact, it may be evil power that suggests revenge. Sometimes, after aiding a ceremonialist to cure several patients, it tempts him to use the ritual for harmful ends. Some shamans interpret successive failures as proof that power has deceived them. The ritualist may suspect that what he thought was benign power is really capricious witchcraft, and he may refuse to conduct the ceremony thereafter. Fear of witchcraft is vivid and pervasive in Apache thought. Even the ghosts of those who in life were witches strive to stalk the earth doing mischief rather than going quietly to the underground land of the dead.

The knowledge gained by a shaman may be so personal that he may never pass it on. Others may agree to teach their ceremony to someone, but whether the student can practice successfully depends on the will of power. If the novice forgets details or fails to achieve results, it is assumed that power refuses to work through him. Even if an understudy finds favor with power, he is still to be considered a shaman rather than a priest, for what he accomplishes rests less on what he learned from another than on the rapport he maintains with the supernatural. As his intimacy with his power

grows, a shaman may be taught additional uses for the ceremony. He may practice it only for his immediate family, or he may make more general use of it. Shamans may acquire several rites and employ each to combat a different malady.

The Apache also perform a series of life-cycle rites, over which, depending on the tribe or the occasion, either priests or shamans may preside. These occur when an infant is placed in the cradleboard, when a child takes his first steps, and when, during the following spring, his hair is shorn except for a few locks left to link him with the growing season and promote good health. A girl's puberty rite takes place soon after the first menses to ensure a long and happy life for her. The family must host a large number of friends for four days, procure special equipment, and obtain unblemished buckskins for her dress. Several ceremonialists have to be hired. One is a woman who will make the girl's costume, advise her, lead her to the ceremonial enclosure, and care for her during the four-day event. Another is the ritualist who prays for the girl and to whose songs she does stylized dances each night. To safeguard the well-being of those gathered for the occasion, a ceremonialist is employed to prepare a group of young men as masked dancers who impersonate mountain spirits, the protectors of Apache territories. Most tribes also engage in training practices that ritually prepare a boy for his first raid and warpath experience.

The shamanic principle is paralleled in all Apache tribes by the priestly model. In each tribe there is at least one rite that was painstakingly taught to the people by great supernaturals who were once among them. Early in mankind's existence, when monsters threatened man's survival, a divine maiden miraculously gave birth to a son who grew up to slay these threatening beings. The mother and her son taught the Apache the details of the female puberty rite and serve as exemplars of proper male and female behavior. The ceremonies they taught must be continued in the prescribed manner if all is to go well with the tribe. The practitioners of the rite do not claim divine inspiration but feel that they are performing a public service. When their ranks are thinned by death, an attempt is made to recruit young people as understudies. Such persons become true priests. They carry on traditional practices without the expectation that supernatural power will intervene. In priestly ceremonies there is none of the contest between good and evil so prominent in shamanism.

In every Apache tribe, religion is a combination of shamanic and priestly rites, but in differing proportions. Shamanism predominates among the Chiricahua and the Mescalero. The Jicarilla favor priestly ceremo-

nies and tend to employ shamanism only in emergencies. Other tribes range somewhere in between. Yet, despite variations, common symbols and concepts knit all Apache ceremonialism into a recognizable and understandable whole.

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MORRIS EDWARD OPLER

APHRODITE was the Greek goddess of beauty and erotic love. According to Hesiod, Aphrodite was born of the foam *(aphros)* surrounding the severed, sea-tossed genitals of Ouranos. She is called Cypris or Cytheria in honor of two of the islands on which she is said to have first come ashore. His tale expresses in mythological form the Greek recognition that Aphrodite was originally an Asian goddess of the Ishtar type, a creatrix, a goddess of vegetation and war, a queen of heaven. The epithet Aphrodite Ourania ("heavenly Aphrodite") confirms this association (despite Plato's attempt to interpret it in spiritual terms). The Corinthian Aphrodite who bore this title was worshiped with orgiastic rites otherwise more characteristic of Asian reliogiosity than of Greek.

Because of her sea-born origin, Aphrodite is revered as goddess of the calm summer sea and prosperous voyaging and is associated with the amphibian tortoise and a great variety of water birds. As a fertility goddess she is seen as the source of all reproductive energies: in her presence all creatures are filled with sexual longing; she is the goddess of fruit and flower; and the seasons, the Horai, are her attendants. Love in Aphrodite's realm is a self-validating cosmic power, a love that begets life. Though not a goddess of battle in Greece, in both cult and myth she is frequently paired with Ares, the god of war, who is the father of many of her children (including, in some accounts, Eros, though the association of Aphrodite with Eros is late and more literary than cultic).

In Homer, Aphrodite is a far less potent goddess of human love; deprived of her foreign origin, she is clearly dependent on all-father Zeus, being his daughter by an otherwise insignificant Okeanid, Dione. According to Homer, Aphrodite, the goddess of spontaneous self-giving love, was married to Hephaistos, the crippled artisan. Yet even Homer recognizes how ludicrous it is to imagine Aphrodite as a faithful spouse; true to her own being, she makes a cuckold of her husband through her protracted affair with Ares.

Although the Greeks worshiped Aphrodite primarily as a divinity associated with human sexual eroticism, her earlier associations with cosmic creativity were not entirely lost. The love inspired by golden, sun-loving Aphrodite was a life-infusing warmth, love for its own sake, for pleasure, not for the sake of progeny or power. Within her domain falls all physically passionate love, marital or adulterous, heterosexual or homosexual. None is immune to this love except the three virginal goddesses Hestia, Athena, and Artemis; even Aphrodite herself must succumb, as the tales of her love for Anchises and Adonis make evident. Even the ancient identity between the goddess of love and the goddess of death is still dimly evident in the Greek traditions about Aphrodite: the disintegration, the abandonment, the guilt, the loss intrinsic to love enter into almost every tale told in her honor.

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CHRISTINE DOWNING

APOCALYPSE. [*This entry consists of three articles, an introduction to the nature of apocalypse as a literary genre and two companion articles that discuss in greater depth the apocalyptic in Judaism:* Jewish Apocalypticism to the Rabbinic Period *and* Medieval Jewish Apocalyptic Literature.]

An Overview

Apocalypse, as the name of a literary genre, is derived from the *Apocalypse of John*, or *Book of Revelation*, in the New Testament. The word itself means "revelation," but it is reserved for revelations of a particular kind: mysterious revelations that are mediated or explained by a supernatural figure, usually an angel. They disclose a transcendent world of supernatural powers and an eschatological scenario that includes the judgment of the dead.

The *Book of Revelation* (about 90 CE) is the earliest work that calls itself an apocalypse (*Rv.* 1:1), and even there the word may be meant in the general sense of "revelation." The usage as a genre label became common from the second century on, and numerous Christian compositions are so titled (e.g., the *Apocalypse of Peter*, the *Apocalypse of Paul*). The Cologne Mani Codex (fifth century) refers to the apocalypses of Adam, Sethel, Enosh, Shem, and Enoch. The title is found in some Jewish apocalypses from the late first century CE (e.g., *2 Baruch* and *3 Baruch*), but may have been added by later scribes. The ancient usage is not entirely reliable. The title was never added to some major apocalypses (e.g., those contained in *1 Enoch*) and is occasionally found in works of a different genre (e.g., the *Apocalypse of Moses*, a variant of the *Life of Adam and Eve*).

The Jewish Apocalypses. The genre is older than the title and is well attested in Judaism from the third century BCE on. The Jewish apocalypses are of two main types. The better known of these might be described as historical apocalypses. They are found in the *Book of Daniel* (the only apocalypse in the Hebrew scriptures), *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, and some sections of *1 Enoch*. In these

apocalypses, the revelation is given in allegorical visions, interpreted by an angel. The content is primarily historical and is given in the form of an extended prophecy. History is divided into a set number of periods. The finale may include the national and political restoration of Israel, but the emphasis is on the replacement of the present world order by one that is radically new. In its most extreme form the eschatology of this type of apocalypse envisages the end of the world, as, for example, in *4 Ezra* 7, where the creation is returned to primeval silence for seven days. These apocalypses often had their origin in a historical crisis. The *Book of Daniel* and some sections of *1 Enoch* were written in response to the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes that led to the Maccabean revolt (c. 168 BCE). *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* were written in the aftermath of the war against Rome and the destruction of Jerusalem.

The second type of Jewish apocalypse is the otherworldly journey. In the earliest example of this type, the "Book of the Watchers" in *1 Enoch* (third century BCE), Enoch ascends to the presence of God, following which the angels take him on a tour that ranges over the whole earth to the ends of the universe. More characteristic of this type is the ascent of the visionary through a numbered series of heavens. [*See* Ascension.] The standard number was seven, although three (in the *Testament of Levi*) and five (in *3 Baruch*) are also attested. More mystical in orientation, these apocalypses often include a vision of the throne of God. The eschatology of these works is focused more on personal afterlife than on cosmic transformation, but they may also predict a general judgment.

These two types of apocalypse are not wholly discrete. The *Apocalypse of Abraham*, an ascent-type apocalypse from the late first century CE, contains a brief overview of history in set periods. The *Similitudes of Enoch*, a Jewish work of the mid-first century CE, combines allegorical visions with an ascent and is largely concerned with political and social abuses. Both types are found in the collection of writings known as *1 Enoch*, which is known in full only in Geez (Ethiopic) translations but is now attested in Aramaic fragments from the Dead Sea Scrolls, which date to the second century BCE.

All the Jewish apocalypses are pseudonymous—that is, they do not give the names of their real authors but claim to report the revelations of famous ancient men, such as Enoch, Moses, or Abraham. Consequently, the historical predictions in these works are usually prophecies after the fact, or *vaticinia ex eventu*. These pseudo-prophecies often extend from very early times down to the actual time of composition. They were presumably

intended to lend credibility to the real eschatological prophecies that followed. Pseudonymity was widespread in the Hellenistic world; while some people were surely aware of the convention involved, its effectiveness depended on the credulity of the masses. The apocalypses were generally learned works composed by the inner circles of the wise. Some at least were intended for a wider audience (e.g., the *Book of Daniel*), but they did not arise as folk literature.

Origins of the Genre. The origins of this genre remain obscure. Descriptions of journeys to the heavens or the netherworld were fairly common in antiquity. Examples can be found as early as book 11 of Homer's *Odyssey*. A whole tradition of such revelations can be found in Greek philosophical texts (e.g., the "Myth of Er" in Plato's *Republic*, book 10), in what would seem to be a secondary use of the genre. The Greek material exercised some influence on the Jewish journey-type apocalypses and on the Christian development of the genre. A more plausible source for the genre, in both its Greek and Jewish forms, has been sought in Persian religion. Some characteristic features of the historical apocalypses, including the division of history into a set number of periods and the resurrection of the dead, were a part of Persian thought from an early time. A full-blown apocalypse of the historical type is found in the *Bahman Yasht*, a *zand*, or commentary, on a lost hymn of the Avesta. Analogous material is found in the *Oracle of Hystaspes*, a pre-Christian Persian work preserved in Latin by Lactantius. Periodization and the eschatological renewal of the world are integral features of the *Bundahishn*, the great compendium of Persian theology from the twelfth century CE. The only Persian example of a thoroughgoing ascent-type apocalypse is the ninth-century *Book of Arda Viraf (Ardā Wīrāz Nāmag)*, but the ascent of the soul was an important motif in Persian eschatology from much earlier times. Unfortunately, the significance of the Persian material for the origins of the genre is uncertain because of the difficulty of dating it. Most of the Persian apocalyptic material is preserved in Pahlavi writings of the ninth to the twelfth centuries CE. These writings undoubtedly preserve very old traditions that reach back to pre-Christian times, but it is difficult to be sure of the antiquity of specific passages or motifs.

The Jewish apocalypses were, in any case, a largely independent development drawing heavily on the Hebrew scriptures. There was obvious continuity with biblical prophecy, especially in the historical apocalypses such as the *Book of Daniel*. In the *Book of Zechariah*, written at the end of the sixth century BCE, after the Babylonian exile, we find allegorical visions interpreted by an angel that are very similar in form to the apocalypses. Characteristic apocalyptic themes, such as the idea of a new creation, appear in other prophetic texts from the same period (*Is.* 65:17). The apocalyptic idea of cosmic judgment could be viewed as a development of the prophetic "day of the Lord" (*Am.* 5:18). The apocalypses differed from biblical prophecy in their belief in the judgment of the dead and also in their relative lack of the direct exhortations that were the trademark of the prophets. Accordingly, some scholars have suggested that they are akin to wisdom rather than to prophecy. It is true that the apocalypses seek to impart a kind of wisdom, but it is a supernatural wisdom that depends on revelation and thus is very different from the empirical wisdom of the biblical *Book of Proverbs*.

The Genre in Christianity. The apocalyptic genre declined in Judaism after the first century CE, although heavenly ascents continued to play an important part in the Jewish mystical tradition. By contrast, the genre flourished in Christianity. The *Book of Revelation* in the New Testament has its closest analogies with the *Book of Daniel* and the historical apocalypses, but it is exceptional in not being pseudonymous. The convention of pseudonymity was quickly adopted, however, and apocalypses of Peter, Paul, and others proliferated into the Middle Ages. The genre was also adapted by the gnostics. The Nag Hammadi collection of codices (found in Egypt in 1945), which dates from about 400 CE, includes apocalypses of Adam, Peter, Paul, and James. The gnostic apocalypses differ from the Jewish and Christian ones in their emphasis on salvation in the present through *gnōsis*, or saving knowledge, and their lack of interest in cosmic transformation, although some gnostic apocalypses include the destruction of this world.

The mystically oriented ascent-type apocalypse continued to exist in Christianity quite apart from gnosticism and left an imprint on world literature in Dante's *Commedia*. The historical apocalypticism of the Middle Ages was more widely influential. A crucial figure here was Joachim of Fiore, a twelfth-century abbot who looked for a new age of the Holy Spirit, to be ushered in by the defeat of the Antichrist. Historical apocalypticism merges easily into millenarianism, where the emphasis is less on supernatural revelation than on the coming utopian age.

Other Usage. Some scholars apply the terms *apocalypse* and *apocalypticism* to the study of millenarian and eschatological thought in various cultures, from the cargo cults of Melanesia to the Ghost Dance of nineteenth-century American Indians. While there are undoubtedly analogies between these various movements, and while the Ghost Dance was indeed influenced in

part by Christian apocalyptic ideas, it is debatable whether the term may be applied to these cases with strict precision. The modern colloquial use of the word *apocalypse* to denote a catastrophic disaster retains one motif associated with the word in antiquity, but loses the context of revelation that was decisive for the original meaning of the word.

[*See* Biblical Literature *for further discussion and examples of apocalyptic writings. For related themes, see* Ascension; Eschatology; Judgment of the Dead; *and* Millenarianism.]

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JOHN J. COLLINS

Jewish Apocalypticism to the Rabbinic Period

Although scholars have found it extremely difficult to reach consensus with regard to the question of the point of view that will render a clear and overall definition of the term *apocalypticism*, it is safe to say that the term can be applied to a group of writings that pertain to the revelations (the Greek term *apokalupsis* means "revelation") of divine cosmological and historical secrets. These writings were composed from the end of the era of classical prophecy, that is, from the fourth century BCE onward. The history of apocalypticism can be divided into the following parts: (1) Jewish apocalypticism until the institutionalization of rabbinic Judaism (about 100 CE); (2) Jewish apocalypticism in the Mishnaic and Talmudic period until the Islamic rise and conquest of the Orient (from c. 100 to 600 CE); (3) Christian and gnostic apocalypticism in the early centuries of the common era; (4) medieval Jewish and Christian apocalypticism (from the early days of Islam until the thirteenth century); and (5) apocalypticism from the thirteenth century onward. For the sake of brevity, the focus of discussion here will be on the first type of apocalypticism. It is here that the major features and characteristics of apocalypticism have been shaped, although later types of apocalypticism have developed several new qualities.

The point of view in this discussion of apocalypticism is that of scripture. Since scripture, in its variety of books and views, shaped the Jewish mind and worldview in antiquity, any religious corpus of writings that was created in subsequent generations annexed itself to scripture and sought scripturelike authority. In this manner not only the sense of organic continuity—so vital for establishing a religious tradition—was allowed to prevail, but also the need for adapting old concepts and beliefs to changing and new purposes was well served.

Apocalypticism is gradually shifting from the backstage position it so often used to occupy in scholarship to the front of the stage. Scholars have become increasingly aware of the importance of apocalypticism for a better understanding of certain concepts and religious positions maintained in the Hebrew scriptures, for a more profound evaluation of certain historical and ideological processes in the so-called intertestamental period; for an assessment of such religious streams as the Essene sect, the Dead Sea sect (which in all likelihood is an offshoot of the Essene sect), and *merkavah* mysticism; and for a deeper comprehension of the rise of Christianity and gnosticism.

Apocalypticism is first of all a series of writings bearing special literary qualities, but it is also a religious point of view. In recent years it has become customary to speak of apocalypticism in terms of a literary genre. However, curiously enough, the more attention scholars give to the subject the more difficult it becomes for them to gain an overall picture and characterization of the phenomenon. I believe that it is in the context of the scriptural world, in the widest sense of the term, that apocalypticism is best understood and most adequately evaluated. This fact holds true also when one agrees with those scholars who hold that several passages (*Isaiah* 24–27, for example) and even books (*Daniel* and *Zechariah*) in scripture are in themselves apocalyptic in nature.

The link between apocalypticism and scripture was forged in a number of ways. Most striking of these is the way in which the apocalyptic visionaries are made to bear the names of illustrious people whose works and ideas are known from scripture. Some of the great men of scripture, such as Adam, Enoch, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Baruch, and Ezra, are taken as lending their names to the apocalyptic visionaries. In fact, all apocalypses are pseudepigraphs, that is, writings that are literally attributed to people who lived at an earlier time than that in which they were actually written. Thus, for instance, Enoch, who lived in antediluvian times, became the hero of several apocalyptic writings composed after the destruction of the First and the Second Temples of Jerusalem (587/6 BCE and 70 CE, respectively). The fictitious authorship of the apocalyptic writings has become one of their chief characteristics, but in no way can pseudepigraphy be considered the only means of annexing apocalypticism to scripture.

The apocalyptic writings are "inserted" into the scriptural stories that tell of the acts of the heroes whose names are chosen as the names of the heroes of the apocalyptic writings. In this respect, every one of the apocalyptic writings enlarges upon scriptural scenes, events, or series of prophecies. In other words, when viewed from a scriptural point of view, apocalypticism has a marked exegetical character.

Exegetical needs as such should not be considered a major factor in the rise of apocalypticism, yet in a very wide sense they had a role to play in shaping some of the literary qualities of apocalypticism. The need to enlarge upon, to expand and to interpret—even to change and to rewrite—scripture is already manifest in scripture itself (*Deuteronomy* and *Chronicles*, for instance). In apocalypticism, one finds that whole scriptural units are rewritten not by a remote literary observer, but, allegedly, by the very people who are the central figures

in the stories in question. Thus, apocalypticism—and for that matter many of the other writings produced at the time of the Second Temple (the so-called intertestamental period)—becomes the product of supposed biblical figures who are presented as retelling, or rewriting, their life stories, which originally appeared in scripture. In most cases, this is presented as an exclusive revelation to a select audience or readership. The contents of that revelation and its meaning are usually conveyed by an angel who appears to the visionary in the course of some extraordinary experiences, such as heavenly ascents.

Generally speaking, apocalypticism bears a number of essential phenomenological resemblances to scriptural prophecy. In fact, apocalypticism may be described as a paraprophetic phenomenon. Yet scholars have also pointed out that apocalypticism bears a close resemblance to the so-called wisdom sections in scripture, such as *Proverbs*, *Job*, and *Ecclesiastes*, and it has become an often debated question whether apocalypticism is closer in form and spirit to prophecy or to wisdom. [*See* Wisdom Literature, *article on* Biblical Books.]

The "Apocalyptic" Stage in the Jewish Religion. I consider apocalypticism in its postscriptural manifestations to mark an important stage in the development of the Jewish religion in antiquity. There are two highly significant concepts, that of knowledge and that of vision, by which this kind of development can be epitomized. The discussion of these two concepts should be of special interest to the historian of religions, since it is here that one encounters a rather rare example, in which a new stage in the history of the Jewish religion is reached, inter alia, through a significant deepening and extension of the religious awareness of people, as epitomized by these two concepts. Or, to put it differently, when seen from the point of view of these two concepts, apocalypticism brings about a substantial change in the cognitive functions of the Jewish type of religious experience; consequently, new areas of religious awareness are opened to the believer. If we take religion as such to be a mode of cognition that facilitates man's knowledge about himself and the divinely governed world, then apocalypticism may be interpreted as marking the opening of new horizons, both experiential and conceptual, for those who adopted the proper technique and accepted the message.

The oldest classic apocalypse we know of is the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Enoch*, parts of which, written in Aramaic, were discovered at Qumran. The book contains at least five parts, all of which are said to be separate compositions. With the exception of chapters 37–71, which are not represented in the Qumran fragments,

a great deal of the material goes back to the third and even fourth century BCE. It is not absolutely certain that all of the Ethiopic version of the book was indeed prepared from a Greek translation of the Aramaic. In any event, Greek fragments of the book (not always agreeing with the Ethiopic) are known from at least two different Byzantine sources. Although there are hardly any reasons for doubting the Jewish origins and setting of apocalypticism, it has to be noticed that, practically speaking, there are no quotations from the apocalyptic corpus of writings in any of the many rabbinic writings of the Mishnaic and Talmudic period. However, quite a number of views and concepts that had their origins in apocalypticism found their way into the rabbinic writings of the period. For example, the messianic conception developed in all likelihood in apocalyptic circles, and from there it entered, almost en bloc, into rabbinic Judaism. The same can be said about beliefs that relate to the future days of redemption. Apocalypticism can well be considered as the original storehouse of such concepts and ideas; from there they passed on into rabbinic Judaism, which was either unaware of their origin or reluctant to admit its indebtedness.

The early church fathers, on the other hand, saw in apocalypticism an important cornerstone on which their eschatological and messianic beliefs rested. Apocalypticism, with its idea of heavenly ascents—that is, visions in which the protagonist sees himself ascending to heaven, learning the secrets of the heavenly world, and then returning to earth to report his experiences—was considered by the church fathers as prefiguring the resurrection of Jesus.

The Christian churches in which apocalypticism was preserved are also responsible for quite a number of interpolations that were introduced into the original texts so as to stress their alleged Christian provenance and relevance. On the other hand, the fact that the Christian translators and editors of the Jewish apocalypses tampered with the texts under their hands also raises the suspicion that certain passages that did not exactly fit the Christian belief and dogma were extracted from the original texts. It remains an unsettled question among scholars as to what is the nature and scope of those Christian interpolations, but it is of equal interest to speculate on the extent to which passages of a controversial nature were excised from the original. Thus, for instance, it is noteworthy that the subject of the divine law (both the written and the oral law) and the obedience of the people to it is only rarely raised in the apocalyptic corpus of writings. Only *Jubilees*, which pertains to the apocalyptic revelation to Moses on Mount Sinai, contains a considerable number of passages that discuss matters relating to the observance of the Law.

In any event, people in antiquity found nothing wrong with tampering with the texts that they copied or translated: they introduced glosses of an expository nature; they interpolated passages, the aim of which was the updating of texts or the harmonization of conflicting attitudes and traditions; and they adopted the role of censors and deleted unfavorable views and utterances. It is no wonder that texts like the Jewish apocalypses, which changed hands so many times, were subject to a considerable number of alterations and adaptations. Thus the reader of these texts who makes use of modern translations must constantly be reminded that they are considerably removed from the ancient original.

To come back to the previous point, Enoch, whose short biography is somewhat enigmatically told in *Genesis* 5:22–24, is the paragon of a whole series of apocalyptic writings. Scholars are even inclined to speak about the Enoch cycle, which contains at least three composite writings: the above-mentioned Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Enoch (1 Enoch)*, the Slavonic *Apocalypse of Enoch (2 Enoch)*, and the Hebrew *Apocalypse of Enoch (3 Enoch)*. The Slavonic *Enoch* was preserved in two versions, both written in Russian. As is the case with so many of the writings that have come down to us from the Roman and the Byzantine period, two—sometimes even more—parallel versions compete for priority and originality. The Slavonic *Apocalypse of Enoch* was in all likelihood composed in the Jewish, Greek-speaking Diaspora in very early Christian times. The Hebrew *Apocalypse of Enoch*, which is the latest of the three, is a blend of apocalyptic and mystical traditions. The mystical tradition is that of the *merkavah* (divine chariot), that is, the type of mystical experiences and speculation that developed in the Mishnaic and Talmudic periods and that engage in heavenly ascensions and conjurations of angels and is exegetically linked to the visions described in *Ezekiel* (chaps. 1–10). In fact, *3 Enoch* is a misnomer, since most of the Hebrew manuscripts containing the text of the book do not refer to it as such. It is more adequately called the *Book of the Heavenly Palaces* (Heb., *Sefer heikhalot*). [*See* Enoch.]

Many of the characteristic features of the Enoch cycle are also found in several other apocalyptic cycles. For instance, one may speak of the Ezra cycle, that is, apocalyptic writings that are pseudepigraphically attributed to Ezra the scribe. There is also a Baruch cycle and an Adam cycle. The question may well be asked whether these cycles represent schools of thinking or simply display a somewhat accidental tendency toward producing apocalyptic writings in clusters bearing the same name. The truth may reflect a combination of both possibilities. For example, the Enoch cycle is preoccupied with

revelations coming in the course of heavenly ascents. In the Baruch and Ezra cycles we find another apocalyptic tradition in which angels come down to earth to impart visions and secrets. However, in the Greek *Apocalypse of Baruch* we once again encounter a heavenly ascent.

The rabbinic material that somehow relates to or derives from the apocalyptic tradition is scattered over the whole of the rabbinic corpus of writings, although great portions of it can be found in the concluding sections of the Mishnaic and Talmudic tractates of *Soṭah* and in the tenth chapter (eleventh in the Babylonian Talmud; seventeenth in the Jerusalem Talmud) of tractate *Sanhedrin*. A famous specimen of an apocalyptic writing that was in all likelihood composed on Jewish soil and then adapted for Christian purposes is the New Testament *Book of Revelation*, also known as the *Apocalypse of John*. As far as we can judge today this is the only work of its kind that is not attributed to a fictitious author. The Gospels, too, each have a section that is commonly referred to as the Synoptic or Small Apocalypse (*Mt.* 24:4–36, *Mk.* 13:5–37, *Lk.* 21:8–36). The essential idea in the Small Apocalypse is the birth pangs and tribulations that will usher in the messianic age. These tribulations are also known as "Day of God," the day, or era, on which all kinds of disasters will befall the wicked ones. Those predestined for salvation will suffer, too. In other words, if one can generalize the ideas preached by Jesus in the Synoptic Apocalypse, the future salvation, the messianic days, will be born out of a great catastrophe. That is one of the key notions of apocalypticism, and it has its origin in scripture (see, for instance, *Joel* 2–3). This is also the origin of the popular usage of the term *apocalyptic*, in the sense of something that implies a catastrophe of unusual dimensions.

Major Features of Apocalypticism. Although the scope of the apocalyptic writings is not great, it is a highly complex corpus of writings with some rather idiosyncratic features. The major difficulty in any attempt to draw the features of apocalypticism is its close resemblance to scripture. But as I have already indicated above, the only way to do justice to apocalypticism is by realizing the novelty of the positions taken compared to the point of view of scripture. There are several components that are totally absent from scripture but definitely present in apocalypticism. Focusing on those components is vital for defining the origins of apocalypticism, not so much with regard to questions such as the earliest dating and actual birthplace, but with regard to the spiritual milieu in which the crystallization of the apocalyptic worldview took place.

There are three subjects the concentration upon which here will most clearly bring out the major features of apocalypticism. These are the two concepts of

vision and knowledge and the new modes of dualistic thinking that developed in the framework of apocalypticism. Although one could with equal justice refer to other components in apocalypticism that were operative in singling it out in comparison to scripture—such as apocalyptic angelology and the periodization of history—the three components referred to above seem to be of major importance and to their discussion I shall soon turn. But before doing so a word is due on angelology and the periodization of history.

Briefly, angelology here implies that angels occupy several important positions, such as intermediaries between the heavenly and earthly realms—an active presence as guides in apocalyptic visions, important roles in regulating natural phenomena—a decisive share in the temptation of man to transgress the decrees of God, and an active presence in the celestial courtroom. The periodization of history entails the idea that God has divided history into eras or epochs, at the consummation of which the messianic era is expected to dawn upon those selected for redemption.

Vision and knowledge. One of the major concepts of the Hebrew scriptures is that "the heavens are the heavens of the Lord, but the earth he has given to the sons of men" (*Ps.* 115:16). Although the immediate sense of this verse in all likelihood is that man was given "dominion over the works of thy hands" (*Ps.* 8:7) on earth, it may also be understood in the sense of "who has ascended to heaven and come down?" (*Prv.* 30:4), that is, no human being was likely to ascend to heaven and come back safely. As can clearly be seen from the case of Elijah, the event of an ascent to heaven actually meant the termination of a person's life on earth (*2 Kgs.* 2:1ff.). Because all of the information a human being needs in order to worship God properly is accessible in terrestrial domains, there is no need to go up to heaven in order to gain any kind of knowledge, not even concerning the Torah (*Dt.* 30:11–12). Accordingly, there is nothing that compels us to interpret, for example, the vision reported in *Isaiah* 6 as taking place anywhere but in the earthly Temple of Jerusalem. The same holds true in the case of Daniel's vision of the godhead (*Dn.* 7:9–10), where the scenery may well have been heavenly, although the visionary himself did not leave his earthly dwelling place.

A completely different kind of experience is recorded in apocalypticism. Several apocalyptic writings contain descriptions of visions experienced in heaven by visionaries who have been translated up to heaven in order to gain firsthand information of the heavenly domains and of the return to earth of those visionaries in order to report their experiences. Such heavenly or otherworldly journeys are reported in the cases of the apocalyptic vi-

sionaries whose literary names are "Abraham," "Isaiah," "Zephaniah," and in the "testaments" attributed to Abraham (*T. Ab.* 10–15; version B:8–12), Levi (*T. Lev.* 2–5), and Jacob; in the Christian apocalypses, the *Revelation to John* and the *Apocalypse of Paul*; and in several gnostic writings, such as the *Paraphrase of Shem* (the list is by no means exhaustive). It is important to notice in this connection that early Jewish apocalypticism does not contain visions of the underworld.

A later development of apocalypticism can be found in the *heikhalot* ("heavenly palaces") literature, which incorporates the writings of the Jewish mystics of the Talmudic period and also contains descriptions of heavenly ascensions. The *heikhalot* writings are of utmost importance to the student of apocalypticism not only because they reflect the ongoing process of apocalyptic activity but also from another point of view: they contain detailed descriptions of the practices—magical (or theurgic) and ascetic—that the mystics have to apply as preparatory techniques for achieving heavenly ascents. In addition to that, these writings specify the measures one has to take during those ascensions to protect oneself from all the dangers lying in wait. The basic assumption here is that people who undergo such experiences are exposed to all kinds of physical and psychic risks, such as hostile angels, destructive (supersonic?) voices, and psychic breakdowns. It is therefore of utmost importance to be well prepared for that heavenly journey and to observe all kinds of rules and regulations in the course of it. The main idea here is that the soul of man, as well as his body (both externally and internally), has to be ritually cleansed before entering the heavenly domains. The central position that these preparatory and protective practices occupy in the *heikhalot* writings endows these writings with the qualities of mystical manuals.

From the religio-phenomenological point of view, the type of revelation that entails a heavenly journey is of utmost importance. What we encounter here is a completely new stage of development in the Jewish religion in antiquity. People are always interested in what the heavens, or outer space, look like, in what they contain, and in how atmospheric, astronomical, and meteorological changes come about. In the scriptural worldview man is conceived of as a remote observer of those matters. Since, as we saw, he could not conceive of himself as reaching out to the heavens, he had to restrict himself to expressions of admiration at the wondrous perfection of the cosmic clockwork. In this respect matters changed radically in the framework of apocalypticism: with ascensions in the center of its experiential core, apocalypticism revolutionized the scriptural worldview. Most heavenly ascents in apocalypticism entailed

a vision of the godhead seated on his throne of glory in the heavenly throne room, surrounded by hosts of angels who minister to him chiefly in singing their songs of praise to him (see, for instance, *1 Enoch* 14, 71; *2 Enoch* 8–9; *Apocalypse of Abraham* 9–19; *Ascension of Isaiah* 6; and *Revelation* 4). These visions of the divine throne room may be classified as the mystical core of apocalypticism: they point to a new direction in the manner in which God is revealed to man. While in scripture God reveals himself in an earthly environment, such as in whirlwinds, on mountaintops (*Ex.* 19, *1 Kgs.* 19, and *Ez.* 1:4), or in the Tabernacle or Temple, in apocalypticism the visionary sees himself as being transferred to heaven so as to see God there. An ascent that is undertaken as a private initiative—even when behind the mystic there stands a body of enthusiasts—is principally a mystical experience. In scriptural prophecy, however, the experience of the prophet does not allow for an ascent; consequently, God is conceived as himself descending to terrestrial domains.

Although a variety of answers have been suggested to the question of what brought about that change and under what circumstances, the type of explanation that is of the greatest interest and relevance to our present discussion links the kind of experience we have just discussed with the kind of knowledge that the apocalyptic visionaries claimed to have had access to. Once again, seen from the point of view of scripture, the type of knowledge found in apocalypticism is unprecedented in its scope, depth, and, what is even more important, in its finality. Apocalypticism, rather than being a literary epigone of scriptural prophecy and wisdom literature, displays a religious temperament that not only has its own interesting literary qualities but also engenders original forms of religious experiences and thinking that result in the attainment of new modes of cognition.

The kind of knowledge displayed in apocalypticism is a total reversal of the kind of knowledge known from scripture. We shall take our point of departure from *Job* 38, which opens the final act in the drama of Job and in which God appears to Job in the whirlwind and addresses him in a long series of questions, the overall effect of which is to convince Job of his inability to know and understand the various functions of nature. The conclusion that God asks Job to draw for himself as a result of this inability is that since no human being is able to equal God in his knowledge and his understanding of and control over nature, nobody is justified in questioning the morality and justice of his providence. God asks Job questions that relate to a wide range of subjects—what may today be described as the natural sciences, such as physics, astronomy, zoology, and biology. All of these subjects rank in the eyes of the writer

as belonging to the realm of divine wisdom and are by definition out of the reach of human knowledge and understanding. When, however, we come, for instance, to the cycle of visions collected in *1 Enoch*, we find that almost everything that in Job's eyes appears to be an insurmountable intellectual challenge opens up like a book in the case of the "Enoch" visionaries. In *1 Enoch* 17–18, 33–36, 41, 51, and 78, one comes across numerous references to natural phenomena, the secrets of which are revealed to the visionaries in the course of their heavenly journeys. "Enoch" saw the storehouses of all the winds and the foundations of the earth (18:1); the cornerstone of the earth (18:2); the winds that turn heaven and cause the disk of the sun and all the stars to set (18:4); the ends of the earth on which heaven rests and the open gates of heaven (33:2); how the stars come out (33:3); the three gates of heaven through which north winds go out and bring cold, hail, hoarfrost, snow, dew, and rain (34:2); the gates through which winds from other directions blow and also bring forth dew and rain (36:3, 41:4–5); and much secret information about all kinds of natural phenomena.

Apocalypticism is almost by definition preoccupied with the revelation of secret knowledge. "Secret knowledge" means any kind of knowledge that was not accessible to people who had previously been dependent for its acquisition on scripture and on the modes of cognition presupposed therein, including prophecy and inspired wisdom. In this respect, the contents of ecstatic, or semiecstatic, experiences were accorded high credibility. Thus, the ultimate knowledge of nature, which to a religious person (as conceived of in the framework of scripture) has to be viewed in the context of either the contemplation of divine providence and governance or prophetic utterances, reaches its highest degree in apocalypticism when it comes in the form of either heavenly ascents or the revelation granted to visionaries through the mediation of angels.

But the knowledge of nature is not the only area in which apocalypticism was alleged to offer a more profound understanding than scripture. Another such area is the knowledge of history and the awareness of its undercurrents, which link together events from the creation of the world to the final acts of redemption so as to become a coherent whole in which the purposeful direction of God becomes manifest. As a passage in the Qumran commentary to *Habakkuk* (col. 7) says, the secret ways of God and his ultimate plan with regard to the history of his people were not stated openly in the words of the scriptural prophets. On the contrary, the prophets themselves were not fully aware of all the secret implications of their prophecies. It was due to the interpretative activity of the Qumran people, whose

spiritual leaders were believed to be divinely inspired, that the latent contents of scriptural prophecy became known. Many scholars consider the Qumranites to have been an apocalyptic community, and, although to all our knowledge heavenly ascensions and angelic revelations were not practiced among them, their overall spiritual activity and their approach to scripture brought them very close to the apocalyptic worldview. Once again, the apocalyptic milieu facilitates a new kind of knowledge. That which had purposefully been hidden away in scripture, in particular in regard to the unfolding of the divine plan in history, became known through apocalyptic activity. In other words, the esoteric attitude maintained in apocalypticism toward scripture entailed an expectation to receive additional stages of revelation, that allegedly had been hidden away even from the scriptural writers themselves.

Dualism. Another major aspect of the radical break of apocalypticism with scripture is the apocalyptic concept of dualism. Briefly, good and evil as conceived of in scripture are two ways of life (*Dt.* 30:15). They relate to the moral choice that confronts man in his daily behavior. In scripture, evil as such is no independent metaphysical entity. Even Satan, as he is conceived of in scripture, is not the rebellious, mythical figure he becomes in apocalypticism. Ontologically speaking, the scriptural world is monistic. In apocalypticism, on the other hand, we find a clear dualistic outlook. In fact, there are two types of dualism in apocalypticism. The first is more mythological in nature and we find it, for instance, in the Enoch cycle (and most specifically in the first part of *1 Enoch*), where a rebellious group of angels led by Satan challenges the supremacy of God. Consequently, the rebellious angels are severely punished, but not before they attempt to seduce the daughters of men and impart to mankind a series of teachings and practices that are considered to be the source of all sin and evil. In other words, evil and sin have their origin in a rebellious act prompted by a group of angels, frequently referred to as the "watchers." It is not difficult to recognize in this explanation of evil traces of mythological material known from ancient Mesopotamia (the revolt of Tiamat against Marduk) and Greece (Prometheus; the Giants).

Another type of dualism is found in the Qumran writings, particularly in the *Rule of the Community* (col. 3). The theory expounded there tells of how God divided dominion over this world between the Prince of Light and the Angel of Darkness. The chosen Sons of Light are under the dominion of the former, while the rest of mankind, particularly the wicked Sons of Darkness, are under the rule of the latter. The role of the Angel of Darkness, as explained in the *Rule of the Community*, is

to tempt the Sons of Darkness into wickedness and evil-doing and thus bring destruction upon them. This schematic theory has a more metaphysical quality than in the case of the first type of dualism. In both cases, however, we find that the dualism maintained is of a rather moderate nature: God is in control of events. In *1 Enoch* the rebellious angels are punished and kept in a desolate place until the days of the final salvation, and in the Qumran writings the theory is that the Angel of Darkness and all of his forces will be destroyed before the eschatological salvation of the Sons of Light. This moderate type of dualism should be compared with the gnostic type of dualism, where almost everything in the heavenly and earthly realms of creation is, by ontological definition, evil and opposed to the good essence of the supernal Father of Truth and Light. All matter is evil, and for that reason the soul of man is evil, too. Only the spirit *(pneuma)* has a chance to awake from its slumber in materiality and begin its ascent to the Father of Light. This gnostic dualism is much more radical in its outlook than its counterparts in apocalypticism. When compared to scripture, apocalyptic dualism is much more outspoken and sharply phrased than the good-evil dichotomy in scripture.

[*For discussion of many works of apocalyptic literature mentioned herein, see* Biblical Literature, *article on* Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. *For discussion of the Qumran community, see* Dead Sea Scrolls.]

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ITHAMAR GRUENWALD

Medieval Jewish Apocalyptic Literature

While the Talmudic and Midrashic literature of late antiquity appropriated various elements of the classical apocalyptic of the intertestamental period, it did so in an unsystematic and fragmentary fashion. Apocalyptic themes competed for attention amidst a wide range of contrasting views on eschatological matters in rabbinic literature. The early decades of the seventh century, however, witnessed the reemergence of a full-fledged apocalyptic literature in Hebrew. Produced primarily between the seventh and tenth centuries in the Land of

Israel and the Near East, these generally brief but fascinating treatises exhibit a rather clearly recognizable set of messianic preoccupations and literary themes.

This literature may be illustrated by reference to one of the most important and influential of these works, *Sefer Zerubbavel* (Book of Zerubbabel). Composed in Hebrew in the early part of the seventh century, probably shortly before the rise of Islam, the *Book of Zerubbabel* may have been written within the context of the military victories achieved by the Byzantine emperor Heraclius against the Persians in the year 629. These historical events no doubt incited speculation concerning the conditions under which the final messianic battles would be waged and their ultimate outcome.

As is characteristic of apocalyptic literature, the book is pseudepigraphically ascribed to a biblical figure, in this case to Zerubbabel, the last ruler of Judaea from the House of David, whose name is associated with the attempts to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem following the Babylonian exile. He is presented as the beneficiary of a series of auditions and visions. The angel Michael (or Metatron as he is also called here) reveals himself to Zerubbabel and leads him to Rome, where he encounters a "bruised and despised man" in the marketplace. The latter turns out to be the Messiah, son of David, named here Menahem ben 'Ammi'el. The Messiah informs Zerubbabel that he is waiting in Rome until the time is ripe for his appearance. Michael then proceeds to relate to Zerubbabel the events that will lead up to the End of Days.

Zerubbabel is informed that the forerunner of the Messiah, son of David, the Messiah, son of Joseph, identified as Nehemyah ben Hushi'el, will gather all of the Jews to Jerusalem, where they will dwell for four years and where they will practice the ancient sacrifices. In the fifth year the king of Persia will rise over Israel, but a woman who accompanies Nehemyah, Hephzibah, mother of the Messiah, son of David, will successfully resist the enemy with the help of a "rod of salvation" that she possesses.

Following these events Zerubbabel is shown a marble statue in Rome of a beautiful woman; he is told that Satan will cohabit with this woman, who will thereupon give birth to Armilus, a cruel tyrant who will achieve dominion over the whole world. Armilus (whose name may be derived from Romulus, founder of Rome) will then come to Jerusalem with nine other kings, over whom he will rule. He will wage war against Israel, slaying Nehemyah ben Hushi'el and driving the survivors of Israel into the desert. Suddenly, however, on the eve of the festival of Passover, the Messiah son of David will appear in the desert to redeem the Jewish people. Angered by the scorn and disbelief with which he is

greeted by the elders of the community, he will shed his tattered clothes for "garments of vengeance" (*Is.* 59:17) and go up to Jerusalem, where he will prove his identity by conquering Armilus and the forces of evil. As with much of this literature, this book does not describe the messianic age itself, but focuses on the developments leading up to it.

The *Book of Zerubbabel* became extremely popular and widely influential. The characters and events depicted in this work provided the basis for a considerable variety of apocalyptic texts over the next several centuries, including the final section of *Midrash Vayosha'*, the *Secrets of Rabbi Shim'on bar Yohai*, the *Prayer of Shim'on bar Yoh'ai*, apocalyptic poems by El'azar Kallir, and the eighth chapter of Sa'adyah Gaon's important philosophical treatise, the *Book of Beliefs and Opinions*.

The messianic speculation found in these and other works is characterized by several distinctive features, which, when taken together, provide a shape to Jewish medieval apocalyptic literature. There is, for example, a preoccupation with the political vicissitudes of great empires; historical upheavals are regarded as bearing momentous messianic significance. There is, moreover, a concern for the broad march of history, of which contemporary events are but a part, leading up to the final tribulations and vindication of the people of Israel. In the apocalyptic literature, redemption is not a matter for theoretical speculation but a process that has already begun, whose culmination is relatively imminent and whose timing can be calculated. A related feature of this literature is the sense that historical and messianic events have a life of their own, independent of the behavior of human beings. There is an inevitability to the force of events with little regard for the choices that Israel might make, such as to repent and gain God's favor. Nor do the authors of these texts indulge in theorizing about why events unfold as they do, other than the obvious fact that righteousness is destined to win over evil. [*See* History, *article on* Jewish Views.]

From a literary point of view, the apocalyptic treatises are, like their themes, extravagant. They revel in fantastic descriptions of their heroes and antiheroes, richly narrating the events that they reveal, and often regard their protagonists as symbols for the cosmic forces of good and evil. Another feature of apocalyptic literature is its revelatory character; knowledge of heavenly secrets and mysteries not attainable through ordinary means are revealed, typically by angels who serve as messengers from on high.

In subsequent centuries various authors wrote under the influence of these early medieval apocalyptic texts. The sixteenth century, in particular, witnessed an ex-

plosion in Mediterranean regions of messianic writing that had strong overtones of apocalypticism. In the wake of the calamitous expulsion of Jewry from Spain and Portugal in the last decade of the fifteenth century, messianic calculation and eschatological ferment were widespread, especially among the Jewish communities of the Mediterranean. Apocalyptically oriented writings of this period include, among others, the extensive and highly influential works of Isaac Abravanel (1437–1508), whose interpretation of the *Book of Daniel* led him to calculate the year 1503 as the beginning of the messianic age; the anonymously authored *Kaf ha-Qetoret* (Spoonful of Incense; c. 1500), which interprets the Psalms as battle hymns for the final apocalyptic wars; the treatises of a Jerusalem rabbi and qabbalist, Avraham ben Eli'ezer ha-Levi (c. 1460–after 1528); and the work of Shelomoh Molkho (c. 1501–1532).

Medieval apocalyptic literature had at least two important historical consequences. First, it played a highly significant role in shaping the vision that Jews had concerning the events leading up to the End of Days. Most rationalist thinkers, exemplified best by Moses Maimonides (1135/8–1204), opposed the apocalyptic conception that the eschaton would be accompanied by cataclysmic events and that the messianic era would differ radically from the established natural order. But despite such reservations on the part of philosophical rationalists, apocalyptic visions and themes occupied a prominent place in the medieval Jewish imagination. Second, apocalyptic literature developed in a religious climate that also gave rise to a variety of short-lived messianic movements. Their connection to apocalypticism may be seen in the militant activism, the penchant for identifying signs of the messianic age, and the consuming interest in international events that typically characterized these movements. Particularly between the seventh and twelfth centuries, especially under Muslim rule in the Near East and Spain, a number of small movements emerged. In the seventeenth century the most significant messianic movement in Judaism since the birth of Christianity came into existence—Shabbateanism. Centered around the figure of a Turkish Jew, Shabbetai Tsevi (1626–1676), the movement, which stirred intense messianic turmoil throughout the Near East and Europe, incorporated within it elements of apocalypticism. Various Shabbatean apocalypses were written (some of which included enlarged and revised versions of *Sefer Zerubbavel*) and employed for the purposes of confirming the messiahship of Shabbetai Tsevi and justifying his antinomian behavior. [*See the biography of Shabbetai Tsevi.*]

[*For further discussion, see* Messianism, *article on* Jewish Messianism.]

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LAWRENCE FINE

APOCATASTASIS. The oldest known usage of the Greek word *apokatastasis* (whence the English *apocatastasis*) dates from the fourth century BCE: it is found in Aristotle (*Magna Moralia* 2.7.1204b), where it refers to the restoration of a being to its natural state. During the Hellenistic age it developed a cosmological and astrological meaning, variations of which can be detected (but with a very different concept of time) in gnostic systems and even in Christian theology, whether orthodox or heterodox, especially in the theology of Origen.

Medical, Moral, and Juridical Meaning. Plato employed the verb *kathistanai* in the sense of to "reestablish" to a normal state following a temporary physical alteration (*Philebus* 42d). The prefix *apo-* in *apokathistanai* seems to reinforce the idea of an integral reestablishment to the original situation. Such is the return of the sick person to health (Hippocrates, 1258f.; Aretaeus, 9.22). The verb has this meaning in the Gospels in the context of the hand made better by Christ (*Mt.* 12:13; *Mk.* 3:5, *Lk.* 6:10). There are Hellenistic references to the apocatastasis, or "resetting," of a joint. In a psychological sense, the same meaning is present (with nuances that are hard to specify) in magical papyri and in the so-called Mithraic Liturgy. Origen (*Against Celsus* 2.24) uses the verb in his commentary on *Job* 5:18 ("For he wounds, but he binds up; he smites, but his hands heal") in one of several expositions where he compares the divine instruction on salvation to a method of therapy. The shift to a spiritual acceptation is evident, for example, in Philo Judaeus (*Who Is the Heir* 293), where "the perfect apocatastasis of the soul" confirms the philosophical healing that follows the two stages of infancy, first unformed and then corrupt. The soul recovers the health of its primitive state after a series of disturbances.

In a sociopolitical context, apocatastasis may signify a reestablishment of civil peace (Polybius, 4.23.l), or of an individual into his family (Polybius, 3.99.6), or the

restoration of his rights (readmission of a soldier into an army, restoration of an exiled citizen to his prerogatives, etc.). Thus the verb *apokathistanai* is applied to the return of the Jews to the Holy Land after the captivity of Babylon (*Jer.* 15:9) as well as to the expression of messianic and eschatological hopes. Yet the noun form is not found in the Septuagint.

Astral Apocatastasis and the Great Year. The popularity and development of astrology influenced the cosmological systems of Hellenistic philosophy starting at the end of the fourth century BCE. Apocatastasis here refers to the periodic return of the stars to their initial position, and the duration of the cycle amounts to a "Great Year." Plato defines the matter without using the word in the *Timaeus* (39d), where he talks of the eight spheres. Eudemius attributed to the Pythagoreans a theory of eternal return, but the Great Year of Oenopides and Philolaus involves only the sun. That of Aristotle, who calls it the "complete year," takes into account the seven planets: it also includes a "great winter" (with a flood) and a "great summer" (with a conflagration). Yet one could trace back to Heraclitus the principle of universal palingenesis periodically renewing the cosmos by fire, as well as the setting of the length of the Great Year at 10,800 years (this latter point is still in dispute). The astronomic teaching on the apocatastasis was refined by the Stoics, who identified it with the sidereal Great Year concluded either by a *kataklusmos* (flood) or by an *ekpurōsis* (conflagration). Cicero defined it (with Aristotle) as the restoration of the seven planets to their point of departure, and sometimes as the return of all the stars (including the fixed ones) to their initial position. The estimates of its length varied considerably, ranging from 2,484 years (Aristarchus); to 10,800 years (Heraclitus); 12,954 years (Cicero); 15,000 years (Macrobius); 300,000 years (Firmicus Maternus), and up to 3,600,000 years (Cassandra). Diogenes of Babylon multiplied Heraclitus's Great Year by 365.

The Neoplatonist Proclus attributes the doctrines of apocatastasis to the "Assyrians," in other words to the astrologers or "Chaldeans." However, Hellenistic astrology also drew from Egyptian traditions. The 36,525 books that Manetho (285–247 BCE) attributed to Hermes Trismegistos represent the amount of 25 zodiac periods of 1,461 years each, that is, probably one Great Year (Gundel and Gundel, 1966). The texts of Hermes Trismegistos make reference to the apocatastasis (*Hermetica* 8.17, 11.2; *Asklepios* 13). In the first century BCE, the Neo-Pythagorean Nigidius Figulus perhaps conceived the palingenetic cycle as being a great cosmic week crowned by the reign of Apollo. Whence the celebrated verses of Vergil's Fourth Eclogue: "A great order is born out of the fullness of ages . . . now your Apollo reigns."

The return of Apollo corresponds to that of the Golden Age. [*See* Golden Age.] The noun *apocatastasis* (as well as the verb from which it derives) always evoked the restoration of the old order. It often implied a "nostalgia for origins." It is no accident that, in the scheme of the Mithraic mysteries, the last of the "doors" is made out of gold and corresponds to the sun, since the order of these planetary doors is that of a week in reverse; there is the presupposition of a backward progression to the beginning of time. In the teaching of the Stoics, this new beginning is seen as having to repeat itself indefinitely, following a constant periodicity that rules out of chance, disorder, and freedom. [*See* Ages of the World.] During the imperial age, the Roman mystique of *renovatio* rested upon the same basic concept (Turcan, 1981, pp. 22ff.).

Gnostic Apocatastases. In gnosticism, apocatastasis also corresponds to a restoration of order, but in a spiritual and eschatological way from the perspective of a history of salvation that is fundamentally foreign to the Stoics' "eternal return." The Christ of the Valentinians "restores" the soul to the Pleroma. Heracleon interprets the wages of the reaper (*Jn* 4:36) as being the salvation of souls and their "apocatastasis" into eternal life (Origen, *Commentary on the Gospel of John* 13.46.299). The Valentinian Wisdom (Sophia) is reintegrated through apocatastasis to the Pleroma, as Enthumesis will also be. The female *aiōn* Achamoth awaits the return of the Savior so that he might "restore" her syzygy. For Marcus, the universal restoration coincides with a return to unity. All these systems tell the story of a restoration of an order disturbed by thought.

The concept of the followers of Basilides is difficult indeed to elucidate, since they imagine at the beginning of all things not a Pleroma but nonbeing. Given this premise, there is no talk about a restoration to an initial state, even less to the truly primitive state of nothingness. However, for the Basilidians the salvation that leads men to God amounts to no less than a reestablishment of order (Hippolytus, *Philosophuma* 7.27.4). Like the Stoics, Basilides linked apocatastasis to astral revolutions: the coming of the Savior was to coincide "with the return of the hours to their point of departure." (ibid., 6.1). Yet this soteriological process is historical: it unfolds within linear rather than cyclical time. The Basilidian apocatastasis is not regressive but rather progressive and definitive. Some other gnostics integrated astral apocatastasis into their systems: the Manichaeans seem to have conceived of a Great Year of 12,000 years with a final conflagration.

Christian Apocatastasis. In the New Testament, the first evidence of the noun *apocatastasis* used in an eschatological sense is found in *Acts of the Apostles* 3:21:

Peter states that heaven must keep Jesus "till the universal apocatastasis comes." According to André Méhat (1956, p. 209), this would mean the "definitive achievement" of what God has promised through his prophets and would indicate the notion of accomplishment and fulfillment. In the Gospels, *Matthew* 17:11 and *Mark* 9:2 speak of Elijah as the one who will "reestablish" everything, and *Malachi* 3:23 (of which the evangelists could not help but think) speaks of the day when Yahveh will "restore" hearts and lead them back to him. Apocatastasis thus represents the salvation of creation reconciled with God, that is, a true return to an original state. The verb has this meaning for Theophilus of Antioch (*To Autolycus* 2.17). For both Tatian (*Address to the Greeks* 6.2) and Irenaeus (*Against Heresies* 5.3.2) apocatastasis is equivalent to resurrection and points without any ambiguity to a restoration of man in God. In Clement of Alexandria, the precise meaning of the word is not always clear, but this much may be said: apocatastasis appears as a return to God that is the result of a recovered purity of heart consequent to absorption in certain "gnostic" teachings; it is a conception not unlike that found in the *Book of Malachi* in the Hebrew scriptures (Old Testament).

It is in Origen that the doctrine of apocatastasis finds its most remarkable expression. In *Against Celsus* 7.3, where he mentions the "restoration of true piety toward God," Origen implicitly refers to *Malachi*. Elsewhere (*Commentary on the Gospel of John* 10.42.291), the word involves the reestablishment of the Jewish people after the captivity, yet as an anticipatory image of the return to the heavenly fatherland. Origen's originality consisted in his having conceived apocatastasis as being universal (including the redemption even of the devil or the annihilation of all evil) and as a return of souls to their pure spirituality. This final incorporality is rejected by Gregory of Nyssa, who nonetheless insists upon apocatastasis as a restoration to the original state. Didymus the Blind and Evagrios of Pontus were condemned at the same time as Origen by the Council of Constantinople (553) for having professed the doctrine of universal apocatastasis and the restoration of incorporeal souls. Yet there is still discussion concerning this principal aspect of Origen's eschatology. Astronomical theories and Greek cosmology seem also to have inspired the Greek bishop Synesius of Cyrene, a convert from Neoplatonism. Yet Tatian (*Address to the Greeks* 6.2) had already emphasized what fundamentally set Christian apocatastasis apart: it depends upon God (and not upon sidereal revolutions) and is completed once and for all at the end of time, without being repeated indefinitely.

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APOCRYPHA. *See under* Biblical Literature.

APOLLINARIS OF LAODICEA (c. 310–c. 390), Christian bishop and heretic. Apollinaris was born in Laodicea. He admired Greek philosophy and literature, to the dismay of Bishop Theodotus, who asked him to repent. After finishing his studies, he became a teacher of classical literature, combining exceptional erudition,

admirable rhetorical ability, and excellent theological education.

Apollinaris gained the affection and the admiration of the church because he reacted vigorously against the emperor Julian the Apostate, who by decree forbade the Christians to teach and use Greek Classical literature. Apollinaris rewrote much of the Bible in an attractive Greek Classical form. In order to provide the Classical methodology for Christian youth, he composed Platonic dialogues from gospel material and paraphrased *Psalms* in hexameters. Using the prose style of ancient Greek writers (such as Euripides), he wrote lives of saints as well as beautiful Christian poetry, for private use as well as for liturgical purposes. Unfortunately, from all this splendid production, nothing survived.

Apollinaris was an uncompromising supporter of the doctrine of Nicaea. He fought and wrote against Origen, Arius, the Arian bishop Eunomius, Marcellus of Ancyra, and others. He enjoyed for a long period of time the respect and affection of the great Fathers of the fourth century, including Athanasius, Basil of Caesarea, and Gregory of Nazianzus (Gregory the Theologian) who called the Apollinarian controversy a "brotherly dispute." His prestige is testified by the fact that he was elected orthodox bishop of Laodicea in 360, having the trust of the Nicene community at large.

Most of Apollinaris's writings have been lost. Quasten in his *Patrology* (vol. 3, pp. 377ff.) divides Apollinaris's writings into exegetical works, apologetic works, polemical works, dogmatic works, poetry, and correspondence with Basil of Caesarea. Among the exegetical works were "innumerable volumes on the Holy Scriptures" (cf. Jerome, *On Famous Men* 104). Among the apologetic works were his thirty books against the Neoplatonist Porphyry and his work *The Truth*, against Julian.

One of the most brilliant theologians of his time, Apollinaris faced the most difficult question of the fourth century: how divinity and humanity could be united in the one person of Jesus Christ. Influenced by Platonic, Aristotelian, and Stoic philosophical understandings of human nature, he tried to apply their method, in an original and syncretistic way, in interpreting the New Testament and in defending the Nicene faith against the heresies of the times, especially Arianism. Thus, he rejected the Arian conception of the incarnation of Christ, which he thought diminished the importance of both God and man in Jesus Christ.

Apollinaris believed that a complete entity, one *phusis*, or nature, cannot be changed or destroyed. A human, in his total existence as body, soul, and spirit (*nous*, or intellect), can be called one *phusis*. In Christ,

union of a complete human nature with the complete divine nature is impossible, for neither nature can be destroyed (the Stoic understanding of mixture). In other words, two complete natures could not produce the one nature of Jesus.

Apollinaris suggested, instead, the "trichotomist" view of man. He approached *1 Corinthians* 15:45 and *1 Thessalonians* 5:23 as meaning that the flesh of Jesus Christ was composed of body, the irrational animal soul, and instead of the intellect, the Logos itself: thus his famous expression "One incarnate nature of the God the Logos" (found in his letter to the bishops exiled at Diocaesarea). For Apollinaris, Christ, having God as his spirit, or intellect, together with soul and body, is rightly called "the human being from heaven" (Norris, 1980, p. 108). In explaining his thesis, Apollinaris writes: "Therefore, the human race is saved not by the assumption of an intellect and of a whole human being but by the assumption of flesh, whose nature it is to be ruled. What was needed was unchangeable Intellect which did not fall under the dominion of the flesh on account of its weakness of understanding but which adapted the flesh to itself without force" (ibid., p. 109).

Apollinaris's acceptance of the full union of the humanity and divinity of Christ in one person, the Logos, did not contradict the dogmatic position of the orthodox Fathers. His great fallacy was the reduction of the humanity of Christ to a body without a rational soul, thus concluding that in Christ there was not a full human nature and which excluded human nature from the fruits of salvation in Jesus Christ. In the end, Apollinaris's Christ was God, to be sure, "enfleshed," but not incarnated.

The orthodox concept of the *theanthropos*, that is, God and man, is missing from the christological structure of Apollinaris. By eliminating the biblical and patristic emphasis on the full humanity of Christ—with full and complete human body, soul, and mental and intellectual capacity—Apollinaris made impossible humanity's full union with the Logos and thus the scope and extent of humanity's salvation. Gregory refuted the thesis of Apollinaris with his devastating statement: "If anyone has put his trust in [Christ] as a man without a human mind, he is really bereft of mind, and quite unworthy of salvation. For that which he has not assumed he has not healed; but that which is united to his Godhead is also saved" *(To Cledonius against Apollinarius*, letter 101).

Apollinaris's heresy, Apollinarianism, is considered the first important christological heresy of the fourth century. Until 374, when Jerome became his pupil in Antioch, Apollinaris's deviation from the orthodox doc-

trine had not become well known. Basil finally realized the depth and repercussions of Apollinaris's heresy and asked for his condemnation. Gregory wrote his two famous letters to Cledonius against the heresy, and Gregory of Nyssa (c. 385) attacked Apollinaris in his *Antirrheticus*. Pope Damasus I condemned him in Rome (c. 374–380). Finally the teaching of Apollinaris was officially condemned in 381 by the Council of Constantinople.

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APOLLO (Gr., Apollōn), an important Greek god, also worshiped at Rome, was the son of Zeus and Leto and the brother of Artemis. He was the guardian of young men as Artemis was of young women, although both he and she were capable of killing their charges with invisible arrows. Attempts to derive the name *Apollōn* (in dialects also *Apellōn, Apeilōn, Aploun*) from Hittite, Lydian, or Lycian have proved abortive, and it now seems established that the West Greek form *Apellōn* is primary, signifying "god of the annual assembly" *(apella)*. It would be at such assemblies, in early times, that young men were received as full adult members of the community, hence Apollo's patronage of them. These institutions were in decay by the beginning of the historical period, but Apollo survived and grew in importance.

He himself was usually portrayed as a handsome young warrior. But he is not associated with war so much as with music, prophecy, healing, and purification. Perhaps this came about because singers and seers frequented the assemblies and, as the most active theologians present, developed Apollo in their own image. We have a hymn to Apollo composed probably in the sixth century BCE by an itinerant blind bard for the great festival at which all the Ionians gathered on the holy island of Delos; he mentions boxing, dancing, and singing contests as part of the proceedings. He tells the sacred story of Apollo's birth on Delos, and mentions the lyre, the bow, and oracles as the god's specialties.

The other great center of Apollo's cult was Delphi, where his most famous oracle was situated. The Delos hymn survives conjoined with another hymn composed at Delphi; the two together form the third of the so-called Homeric Hymns. The Delphic poem tells how Apollo came to Delphi, shot a monstrous serpent that lurked there, established his temple, and imported Cretans to be his priests.

The Delphic sanctuary rose to national fame in the eighth century BCE. The issuing of oracles, originally annual, had to become a monthly event as growing numbers of state officials and private persons from all over Greece (and even beyond) came seeking advice about existing problems or contemplated ventures. Apollo's often ambiguous responses came through a prophetess in a trance; her mysterious vociferations were interpreted and versified by the priests. Apollo prescribed purifications or new rituals in cases of pestilence, and he exercised a powerful influence on cities engaged in sending colonies overseas. [*See* Delphi.] Several other Apollonian oracular centers existed, especially in Asia Minor.

Apollo is often called Phoibos (Lat., Phoebus), originally an epithet meaning "pure, shining." Another common title of his, in contexts of healing or deliverance from danger, is Paian. The paean was a choral prayer for salvation or a thanksgiving after it, usually addressed to Apollo; a healing god, Paian (originally Paiawon), was hypostatized from the song but was quite early interpreted as an aspect of Apollo. The idea of identifying Apollo with the sun originated with an intellectual, sun-venerating sect in the fifth century BCE. It had little influence, except that Roman poets found the name *Phoebus* a convenient synonym for *Sol*. [*See* Sun.]

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A very full account of Apollo and of the evidence for his worship can be found in the fourth volume of L. R. Farnell's classic work, *The Cults of the Greek States*, 5 vols. (1896–1909; New Rochelle, N.Y., 1977). The procedures of the Delphic oracle and its recorded responses are discussed in Joseph Fontenrose's *The Delphic Oracle* (Berkeley, 1978). On Apollo's name and origin, see Walter Burkert's "Apellai und Apollon," *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 118 (1975): 1–21.

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APOLOGETICS. [*This entry, which is restricted to consideration of monotheistic religions, places religious apologetics in comparative perspective and examines the difference between apologetics and polemics. For broader consideration of interreligious communication, see* Dialogue of Religions *and* World's Parliament of Religions. *For discussion of the particulars of the interactions among Jewish, Christian, and Islamic beliefs, see* Polemics.]

Apologetics is other-directed communication of religious belief that makes assertions about knowing and serving God. It represents the content of a particular faith in an essentially intellectualist fashion and, like a national boundary, acts as a membrane for the exchange of ideas. The content of apologetics is based in the revelation of God, but its format is based in culture. Apologetics often is other-directed insofar as it presupposes, at least apparently, an audience external to the faith it represents. Furthermore, it communicates by virtue of patterns of thought and language common to speaker and hearer, which leads the apologist to employ terminology, styles of thought, and ideas familiar to the hearer.

Despite the fact that the audience addressed in religious apologies is often presumed to be outside the faith, apologetic literature often has been most popular within the confines of the religious community for which it speaks rather than among the critics to whom it is nominally addressed. The adoption of an addressant serves as a powerful rhetorical device that helps promote the clarification of ideas. This inclination toward refinement of thought makes apologetics as much a strategy in the forging of an orthodox system of belief as a genre of testimony to nonbelievers. Any religion, monotheistic or otherwise, might adopt an apologetic posture under circumstances in which it perceives the need to defend itself against misunderstanding, criticism, discrimination, or oppression, but the pattern of religious apology that will be examined here emerged from the engagement of unitary conceptions of God with the culture of Greco-Roman polytheism during the first several centuries of the common era.

Defense of Monotheism. In Greco-Roman culture, whose intellectual foundations were buttressed by polytheistic beliefs and practices, monotheism was judged to be both blasphemous and incredible. Jewish thinkers as early as the third century BCE, followed by Christian and Muslim thinkers in early periods of the development of doctrines of Christian and Islamic beliefs, made use of the intellectual apparatus provided by Hellenistic philosophy to explain and defend systematically the foundations of belief in one God. A well-known model for the reasoned defense of belief and practice was Socrates' address before the Athenian court in 399 BCE, which is preserved in Plato's *Apology*. The Greek word *apologia*, meaning "speech in defense," refers to an oral and literary genre known throughout the ancient Mediterranean world. When Socrates was accused of demonstrating impiety toward the ancestral gods of his state and of corrupting the morals of Athenian youth through adherence to unusual beliefs, he argued his case against ignorance and unenlightened authority by means of reason. Although he failed to convince a majority of jurors that his pursuit of wisdom, which had made him a critic of prevailing religious belief, was based in truth, his effort became a model for future apologists. Biblical monotheists subsequently employed established patterns of philosophical argumentation that owed much to Greek philosophy and the example of Socrates to account for the superiority of their positions on faith. They, too, sought to expose what to their way of thinking were the inconsistencies, errors, and even absurdities of polytheism. Furthermore, the Hebrew legacy of truth they represented bore a rational coherence attractive to the Hellenistic way of thinking.

The tradition of justice, divine providence, and the sharp rejection of idolatry emphasized by the Hebrew prophets resounds in Josephus Flavius's treatise known as *Against Apion*. Composed in Greek in the first century CE, Josephus's response to Apion's criticisms of the Jews asserts the antiquity of the Jewish faith according to patterns of Greek historiography, celebrates the biblical God as lawgiver, and denounces polytheistic religions as immoral and irrational. "I would therefore boldly maintain that we have introduced to the rest of the world a very large number of very beautiful ideas. What greater beauty than inviolable piety? What higher justice than obedience?" (2.293). Striving to assure the right of Jews living under Roman domination to refuse participation in local cults, Josephus indicts the polytheists for ignoring the true nature of God and for appealing licentiously to the public taste. On the other

hand, he praises the virtue and purity of the law of Moses and recalls the sensible wisdom of Plato. As the Jewish philosopher Philo Judaeus (d. 50 CE) had done before him, Josephus affirmed a compatibility between biblical faith and the higher morality of Greek philosophy, claiming with bold historicity that the Greek philosophers were among the first imitators of Mosaic law.

The Talmud records disputations between learned rabbis and Roman authorities over the veracity of Jewish ideas and freedom of worship. Beginning in the second century CE, Christians also exercised a strenuous apologetic effort to explain the foundations of their emerging beliefs and to defend themselves against oppression and popular slander. Because Christians would not serve the gods legitimated by Roman authority, they were held to be atheistic and seditious elements of the population. Moreover, the emerging forms of Christian worship and the way of living Christianity promoted among disenfranchised elements of society were viewed suspiciously by the state, eliciting charges of cannibalism and incest. Christian response was defensive, but also, on the model of Josephus, not without an offensive thrust. The defenders of Christianity claimed that the Roman state religion was absurd idolatry, and they offered in its place a simple moral appeal bearing resemblance to Stoic ideals.

Beginning with Quadratus, who wrote in Athens during the reign of Hadrian (117–138), and Aristides, and followed by, among others, Justin Martyr, Tatian, Athenagoras, Melito of Sardis, Theophilus of Antioch, Tertullian, the anonymous author of *To Diognetus*, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Augustine of Hippo (the last of early Christianity's great apologists), written defenses of the young and growing religion proliferated, often in the form of open letters addressed to critics of Christianity or to the emperor in Rome. Much of what must have been a large body of literature has been lost. The arguments in defense of Christian faith and its forms of worship followed methods of reasoning borrowed selectively from Platonism and its influential variations, from Stoicism, and from Skepticism.

Generally, early Christian apologetics had more influence among other Christian thinkers than among non-Christians. The legacy of this prodigious literary output can be located, therefore, in the development of the philosophical foundations of subsequent doctrines of God and of teachings concerning the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Although these apologies reveal compatibilities with current philosophical thought, their practical importance for Christianity lay in their role of helping to define an emerging orthodoxy that found itself in growing competition with gnosticism and Marcionism for the religious allegiance of gentiles. The New Testament itself includes appeals to non-Christians that are apologetic in tone, although no full-fledged apologetic writings are identified before those of the second-century apologists. [*See* Heresy.]

The engagement of biblical faith with sophisticated Greek philosophy is evidenced clearly in early Christian apologetic literature. But although the function of apologetics as intellectual discourse was primary, it should not be overlooked that the apologetic spirit displayed in these writings cooperated intimately with other than solely intellectual religious motives; before the official sanction of Christianity by the Roman emperor in the fourth century, Christian apologists also display a commitment to mission and conversion. The effectiveness of the Christian appeal to conversion was indebted to the formulation of an intellectual foundation of belief, but it also owed its success to the conviction won by martyrdom. Justin Martyr (d. 163/5), in the opening sections of his first apology, evokes the memory of Socrates and embarks upon an argument "required" by reason that proves the case for Christianity as the storehouse of divine providence. The success of his reasoning may be disputed, but the proof of religious conviction gained by martyrdom, which he discusses in the twelfth chapter of his second apology, invokes a form of assertion beyond the realm of dispute: "I myself, too," he says, "when I was delighting in the doctrines of Plato, and heard the Christians slandered, and saw them fearless of death, and of all other things which are counted fearful, perceived that it was impossible that they could be living in wickedness and pleasure." Like many others before and after him, Justin, through his death as through his writings, was to bear proof of the claims made by his newly adopted faith. [*See* Martyrdom.]

In the sixth century of the common era, the prophet Muḥammad's recitation of God's word radicalized monotheism in ways unfamiliar to Jewish and Christian monotheists. The Qur'ān, like the New Testament before it, reflects the emergent competitive relation into which the family members of biblical religion were to come: "The Jews say, 'The Christians stand not on anything'; the Christians say, 'The Jews stand not on anything'; yet they recite the Book. So too the ignorant [i.e., the gentiles] say the like of them" (2:107).

As had postbiblical Christian faith five centuries earlier, post-Qur'anic Islamic faith eventually also underwent a period of formulation and defense of beliefs under the powerful influence of Hellenistic philosophy, which, along with the rich legacy of Indian medicine and mathematics and of Persian literature, provided new dimensions of thought to an expanding Arab world.

In the second century of Islam, theological doctrines began to emerge alongside the current traditions of the Prophet. Confronted from within with degradations of the faith and from without by non-Muslim critics armed with the tools of reasoning developed in Greek and Persian philosophy, some Muslim scholars embraced a speculative theology (*'ilm al-kalām*) for assistance in proclaiming the Prophet's revelation. [*See* Kalām.] Adherents to this practice of speculative theology were originally called *mutakallimūn*, and although their school was condemned in 848 CE by the caliph al-Mutawakkil, the philosophical traditions introduced into the expression of Islamic faith by thinkers such as Abū al-Hudhayl al-'Allāf (d. 849) and al-Naẓẓām (d. 846) left an ongoing mark that survived in the moderate Ash'arī school of subsequent decades.

Originally endorsed by the court, the Mu'tazilah defended Islamic beliefs by demonstrating that there was nothing in Qur'anic faith that contradicted reason. In addition to making claims for the unity of God, the prophethood of Muḥammad, and the validity of the Qur'ān, apologists for Islam began to formulate a cosmology that elaborated an Islamic picture of the universe. The earliest speculative Islamic theology of the Mu'tazilah, however, while it was basically Qur'anic and sought to defend the Prophet's revelation, inclined in such a degree toward intellectualism and the presumption that truth could be demonstrated by reason that even its moderate mutations continued to give offense to the orthodox. What began as an effort to preserve the philosophical wisdom of the past, a prodigious effort that eventuated in an extensive program of translation into Arabic of the works of Aristotle and other Greek philosophers, placed Greek thought so determinatively at the center of Islamic thought that the Islamic philosophical tradition was rejected by Islamic theology. [*See* Falsafah.]

The conflict between reason and revelation, witnessed early in the foundation of Islamic beliefs, has its counterparts throughout the histories of biblical religions. This conflict reflects a characteristic element of apologetics derived from its employment of reason as a tool of religious expression, namely the potential of apologists to give offense to the community of believers for whom they speak, or mean to. Because apologetics customarily turns outward and borrows its modes of expression from a prevailing culture, it opens itself to criticism from within. Philo Judaeus (d. 50 CE) and Josephus (d. around 100 CE) were viewed with suspicion by other Jews of their day and later centuries, as were Moses Maimonides (d. 1204), Barukh Spinoza (d. 1676), and Moses Mendelssohn (d. 1786). The Latin church father Tertullian, even as he benefited from his knowledge of ancient philosophy, was to become famous for his view that the church has as much to do with the philosophical academy as a Christian with a heretic. Familiarity with philosophy has been viewed by many of the orthodox as a pollution of biblical faith and has weighed heavily against many thinkers in the church's struggle to define its parameters of acceptable belief. Modern advocates of Christianity's reasonableness such as Vladimir Solov'ev (d. 1900), Maurice Blondel (d. 1949), and Paul Tillich (d. 1965), who chose to employ patterns of philosophical discourse appropriate to their intelligence of God's word, suffered the mistrust of their coreligionists, as have modern Jewish thinkers such as Franz Rosenzweig (d. 1929) and Martin Buber (d. 1965).

Apologetics rankles, despite its dedication to God's revelation, because it occupies a place on the boundaries of belief. It employs forms of expression that depend in part upon intellectual and cultural transformations occurring outside the confines of particular traditions of belief, and it uses language that is not wholly natural to the sacred language it interprets. The culture, however, is not merely a challenge but also a promise to the apologetic motive of religious thinkers, because it presents the possibility of a new form of a normative content, a renewed account of God's being and will. [*For further discussion of the crosscurrents between biblical faith and Western philosophy, see* Philosophy.]

Fundamental Theology. The view of religious apologetics given above—namely, that it emerged historically as a defense of monotheism—bespeaks the empirical circumstances of one age and (more or less) one culture: the Hellenistic. In the longer religious histories of the Middle East, North Africa, Europe, and elsewhere the confrontation of monotheism with nonmonotheistic systems of belief was eclipsed by confrontations between various interpretations of monotheism, both in the struggle for orthodoxy within each of the dominant monotheisms and in the broader encounter of these monotheistic faiths with one another. Under these competitive circumstances, the effort to clarify the fundamentals of belief no longer referred to the basic propositions of monotheism alone but also to the elements of each particular tradition. This gave rise to a distinction in function between apologetics and polemics, which, although it exists in theory, does not always occur in practice.

The Protestant theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (d. 1834) in his analysis of the discipline of theology, *Brief Outline on the Study of Theology*, distinguishes between the apologetic and the polemical sides of philo-

sophical theology. Although they are closely related, he finds that apologetics aims to make truth recognizable; polemics, on the other hand, aims to expose deviations from truth (secs. 39 and 40). Determination of where the exposure of error ends, however, and where the proclamation of truth begins (and vice versa) depends upon the breadth of one's religious understanding. Is it apologetic or polemical for Christian scripture to proclaim Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah of Jewish expectation? Is it apologetic or polemical for Muḥammad, reflecting Christian controversies about the doctrine of the Trinity, to implicate polytheism in that Christian doctrine about God by declaring, "In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate / Say: 'He is God, One, / God, the Everlasting Refuge, / who has not begotten, and has not been begotten, / and equal to Him is not any one'" (surah 112)? Is it revelation or offense for Paul of Tarsus, as apostle of Christ, to proclaim to the people of Athens that his God is the God they worship at their altar dedicated "To the Unknown God" (*Acts* 17:23)? [*See* Agnōstos Theos.] Truth informs each of these claims, and in each claim a defense of truth is made; but in the act of defending belief an offensive position is taken that is polemical as well as apologetic, because it exposes purported deviation from the truth at the same time as it recognizes truth. The outward-looking proclamation and the inward-looking critique are bound together.

Religious apologetics can be defined usefully in modern terms as the laying out of the fundamentals of religious belief. It is an orienting rather than refining branch of religious expression. The language it employs, though aptly described as "reasoning," will differ according to context. Patterns of reasoned discourse are themselves the subject of much philosophical debate, and, therefore, it is not possible to say with assurance what forms apologetics as a religious phenomenon will take.

In the intellectual history of the West, the dominance of Christian religion made the fundamentals of Christian belief as self-evident as those of polytheism and the state cult had been in the ancient Roman world. Roman Catholic apologetic writings against Muslims in the Middle Ages (e.g., Thomas Aquinas's *Summa contra gentiles*) and against non-Catholic Christians during and after the Protestant Reformation concentrated on particulars of Christian belief. After the European Enlightenment, however, a shift occurred with respect to the issues at stake in founding religious belief. No longer a matter of belief in many gods rather than one, or of one monotheism as distinct from another, the very reasonableness of belief itself was called into question

in the intellectual discourse of Western culture, and countless defenses of Christianity were penned that argued for the very validity of religion and the reality of the supernatural. [*See* Enlightenment, The.]

By striving to make religion comprehensible in the intellectual and cultural environment it inhabits, apologetics, according to J.-B. Metz, recognizes that part of its essence is "to share the questioning and problems of the world in which it lives." But what constitutes "the world" for Jews, Christians, and Muslims, however unified advancing technologies of communication may make it seem, differs radically depending upon historical contingencies. For many Christians, for example, the virtues and validities of Judaism and Islam remain quite alien. The situation described by Syed Ameer Ali (d. 1928), the Indian modernist, in the preface to his *The Spirit of Islam* (1890) is not at all inappropriate a century later, nor is Ali's message at all unlike that of Josephus in addressing the Romans about Jewish religion: Islam's "great work in the uplifting of humanity," says Ali, "is either ignored or not appreciated; nor are its rationale, its ideals and its aspirations properly understood."

It would be unnecessarily limiting to presume that the preeminent form of apologetics, the treatise, remains the only medium for enhancing the comprehensibility of religious belief and for laying out its fundamentals. The censors of post-Reformation Europe were not unaware of the power of visual images in the competition between Catholicism and Protestantism. What the introduction of electronic media into parts of the world largely untouched by literacy will mean to efforts to give reasonable foundations to religious belief can only be surmised and not explored at all in this context. It can be said, however, that the sensitivities with which apologists for religion respond to their world will determine the vitality of their expressions of belief.

Philo sought the compatibility of biblical religion with ancient wisdom; al-Naẓẓām strove to preserve his faith from misconception through reliance on reason; Maimonides aimed to guide the perplexed with the help of Aristotle; Tillich diagnosed the human predicament in search of God's cure; for a significant number of late twentieth-century theologians, the responsibility of the rich for the poor has become not merely a topic of contemporary theology but its point of departure, its foundation. As the concerns that provoke fundamental expressions of belief change, so too do religious responses to them. Leitmotifs of "too Greek," "too philosophical," "too intellectual," "too psychological," "too Marxist"—and their many variations, both theological and ideological—will remain part of the chorus of reli-

gious apologetics as long as apologetics remains a lively element of religious ideas.

[*See also the biographies of the religious thinkers mentioned herein.*]

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APOPHATISM. *See* Christian Spirituality; Theology, *article on* Christian Theology; *and* Via Negativa; *see also* Language, *article on* Buddhist Views of Language.

APOSTASY is derived from the Greek *apostasia*, a secondary form of *apostasis*, originally denoting insurrection or secession (*Acts* 5:37). In the sense of "rebellion against God" it had already been used in the Septuagint (*Jos.* 22:22). The Christians of the third century definitely fixed its usage to the meaning of abandonment of Christianity for another religion, especially paganism. (Cyprian, *Epistula* 57.3.1). The Christian usage of the term provides its essential elements: apostasy occurs in public and not in private; apostates abandon an exclusive and institutionalized religion for another. In this sense apostasy is subject to specific historical con-

ditions. It occurs when different religions compete with each other in one public arena. Here we will distinguish three aspects: occurrences of apostasy, legal sanctions with regard to apostates, and expectations of an apocalyptic desertion of the true religion at the end time.

Apostasy in Jewish Ritual Law. Clear instances of apostasy are first found in Hellenistic Judaea. The very notion of *hellenismos* was coined for the conflict that stirred up the Jews under Antiochos Epiphanes (r. 175–164 BCE). It started when the Jewish high priest Jason "abolished the constitution based on laws and introduced new customs contrary to these laws" (*2 Mc.* 4:11). He founded a gymnasium and an institution for training *ephebi*. Everyone who passed could then be enrolled in the register of citizens of Antiochea, the new name for Jerusalem (*2 Mc.* 4:9). A "passion for Hellenism" and "an influx of foreign customs" swept over the country (*2 Mc.* 4:13). The Maccabean adversaries of the *hellenismos* fought in their turn for the *judaismos* (*2 Mc.* 2:21). The struggle between these two adversaries became still more grave, when in 167 BCE the next Jewish high priest, Menelaos, succeeded in convincing the Seleucid ruler "to compel the Jews to abandon their fathers' religion" (Josephus Flavius, *Jewish Antiquities* 12.384), and the ruler ordered the abandonment of the Jewish law (*1 Mc.* 1:44–53; *2 Mc.* 6:1ff.). At first, abandonment of the Jewish law occurred without any oppression by the rulers, and spontaneous apostasy recurred sporadically in later times. Well known is the case of the nephew of the Jewish philosopher Philo, Tiberius Alexander, "who did not stand by the practices of his people" (Josephus, *Antiquities* 20.100). Tiberius Alexander was a politician serving the Roman state. We also know of Alexandrian Jews adopting Greek philosophy.

The *Book of Daniel*, written between 167 and 163 BCE, made Jewish apostasy part of the apocalyptic drama. At the end of time there will be Jews abandoning the holy covenant (*Dn.* 11:30). The pre-Maccabean *Apocalypse of Weeks* clung to the same idea: "After that in the seventh week an apostate generation shall arise, its deeds shall be many and all of them criminal" (*1 En.* 93:9). Apostasy is assessed not only in religious terms but also in moral and political ones. Abandonment of belief is near to treason and crime. Similarly, treason is rejected for religious reasons. When the historian Josephus Flavius, as commander of Galilean insurgents, was suspected of treason in 66 CE, his chief adversary told the people: "If you cannot, for your own sakes, citizens, detest Josephus, fix your eyes on the ancestral laws *(patrioi nomoi)*, which your commander-in-chief intended to betray, and for their sakes hate the crime and punish the audacious criminal" (Josephus, *The Life* 135). The Jewish

notion of the martyr reflects the same set of beliefs from a different perspective: the martyr is assured of resurrection to life (*2 Mc.* 7:14; *Dn.* 12:2). His death is at the same time "an example of high-mindedness and a memory of virtue" (*2 Mc.* 6:31). If religion and citizenship are fused, the apostate who abandons the religion of his ancestors is regarded as a traitor. He is virtually the domestic ally of the external enemy.

Apostasy needed to be legally regulated. "Whole Israel has a share in the world to come. . . . And these don't have a share in the world to come: whoever says, 'There is no resurrection of the dead in the Torah' and 'There is no Torah from heaven,' and the Epicurean" (*San.* 10:1). The apostate is denied more than salvation. About 100 CE the twelfth prayer of the so-called eighteen benedictions has been expanded by the *birkat haminim* ("the blessing over the heretics"): "For apostates let there be no hope. The dominion of arrogance do thou speedily root out in our days. And let Christians and the sectarians perish in a moment. Let them be blotted out of the book of the living." This amplification implies that apostates had earlier been cursed in Jewish divine service. Christian literature corroborates that after the fall of the temple Jews cursed the Christians. Only after the third century CE did the rabbis have legal power to expel dissidents from Judaism; previously this power rested with the Jewish synagogues. The *Gospel of John*, which originated in Asia Minor, mentions several times the expulsion of Christians from synagogues (9:22; 12:42; 16:2ff.). The Jewish communities of Asia Minor had been granted the privilege to form associations *(sunodos)* of their own in accordance with their ancestral laws and to decide on their own affairs and controversies. In the *Gospel of John*, the term *sunagōgē* refers also to the community as a whole and not to a building. The Jewish community could withdraw the citizenship from Christian apostates in its *politeuma.*

Apostasy in Greek and Roman Public Cults. Conversion was unknown in Greek and Roman religions because exclusivity was alien to them. But that does not mean that there existed no limits of tolerance. These limits were reached when public citizens abandoned their ancestral religion. Even as early as Livy's time, he could report with indignation that in the crisis of the Second Punic War "not only in secret and within the walls of private houses Roman rites were abandoned, but in public places also, and in the Forum and on the Capitoline, there was a crowd of women who were following the custom of the fathers neither in their sacrifices nor in prayers of the gods" (25.1.7). With the Christian mission, abandonment of the *patrius mos* became much more frequent. In his *First Letter to the Corinthians* Paul already advised the gentile Christians not to

participate in pagan temple meals (*1 Cor.* 8:10–12; 10:19ff.). The Christian apologists sustained this rejection of pagan cults.

The pagan reproaches addressed to Christians were different in East and West. In the Greek East the Christians were accused of godlessness *(atheotēs)*. The accusation is attested for the first time by Justin Martyr in *1 Apology* 6.1 (written between 150–155 CE) and in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 3 (shortly after 156 CE). In the Latin west the Christians were accused of "abandoning the religion of their ancestors" *(christiani qui parentum suorum reliquerant sectam)*. In his edict of tolerance (311 CE) Galerius gave this abandonment as reason for the persecution. Christians should be forced to acknowledge the ancestral religion, he argued (Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 34). The reproach of having left the *mos Romanorum* ("way of the Romans") had already been uttered earlier in the acts of Scillitan martyrs. (See Adolf von Harnack's *Der Vorwurf des Atheismus in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten*, Leipzig, 1905.)

In general, the pagan cults did not expel members who adhered to rival cults or philosophical circles. But often the gods of pagan cults were officially recognized by the civic authorities and ranked, in Rome, for example, with the *di publici populi Romani*. Every citizen had the duty to respect these civic gods. The Christians refusing to do so were not only suspected of *superstitio* but also of political disloyalty. The first important critic of ancient Christianity, the Middle Platonic philosopher Celsus, accused the Christians of insurrection *(stasis)* against the community (Origen, *Against Celsus* 3.5, 3.2). One hundred years later, about 270 CE, Porphyry renewed this criticism. The Christians are atheists, he wrote, "because they abandoned the ancestral gods, on which the existence of every nation and every city is based" (transmitted by Eusebius in his *Praeparatio evangelica* 1.2.2). Other pagan critics called for action. In the writings of Dio Cassius, Maecenas says to Augustus: "Venerate the Divine everywhere and totally according to the ancestral customs and compel the others to do the same" (52.36). The general persecutions of Christians since Decius (r. 249–251 CE) met the demands of such a program. The same holds true for the edict of Diocletian against the Manichaeans (297 CE). It states: "It is the most serious crime to reject what once for all has been arranged and established by the ancestors" (*Mosaicarum et Romanorum legum collatio* 15.3.2f.). In sum, apostasy only became a problem for pagan society when its ancestral customs were rejected. The limits of tolerance were political ones.

Apostasy in the Christian Church. Christianity found its adherents among Jews and pagans. But these new Christians did not always abandon resolutely their old

religious loyalties. Until the time of the Bar Kokhba Revolt (132–135 CE) there were Christians who followed Jewish ritual law painstakingly (e.g., *Gal.* 2:11–14). Other Christians continued to participate in pagan temple meals (e.g., *1 Cor.* 8:10). In the beginning such perseverance was not regarded as apostasy. Only when the so-called orthodox Christian church had separated itself from Jewish-Christians and gnostics did this evaluation change. Apostasy then became a clear-cut issue. The Neoplatonic philosopher Ammonius Saccas is said to have been a Christian originally and to have apostatized (Eusebius, *Church History* 6.19.9f.). The most noted apostate to paganism was the emperor Julian (361–363 CE). He thwarted the church's aims by every means in his power short of actual persecution and resumed the reproach directed against Christians for despising ancestral beliefs. Committed to Neoplatonism, he sustained pagan temples and tried to reform them.

Early Christian authors took over from the Jews the notion of an apocalyptic desertion. In his *Second Letter to the Thessalonians* Paul maintains that the coming of the Lord cannot take place "if not at first comes the apostasy and reveals himself the man of lawlessness the son of perdition" (2:3). The synoptic apocalypse in the *Gospel of Matthew* expects that at the end of time "many shall apostatize," and lawlessness shall abound (24:10; 12:24). But the early Christian conception of an apocalyptic apostasy differed from the above-mentioned Jewish one. Early Christians were less anxious about apostasy to foreign religions than the Jews in Maccabean time had been. They were much more anxious about teachers of a false doctrine. [*See* Heresy.] *The First Letter to Timothy* explicitly states that the apostasy at the end of time is due to gnostic heretics. And the *First Letter of John* points out that the last hour has come because false prophets and teachers have arisen from the community, fulfilling the prophecy of the coming of the Antichrist. If we look to Jewish literature contemporaneous with these Christian texts we detect clear parallels. Texts originating from Qumran speak about the teacher of lies who has not obeyed the teacher of justice. At the ascension of Isaiah all men in this world will believe in Belial, the Antichrist.

From the third century on, the term *apostasy* referred exclusively to apostasy to paganism. Cyprian used the term to describe Christians who had returned to paganism in the time of the persecution by Decius, a move Cyprian equated with heresy (*Epistula* 57.3). Originally, however, apostasy had been conceived as an internal fission of the community due to false prophets and teachers. Here the Jewish and Christian views of apostasy diverge. The apostate abandoning Christian belief is not an ally of the external enemy but the follower of an internal adversary. The law of the early church in regard to apostasy was for that reason very severe. Apostasy was an inexpiable offense. After baptism there was no forgiveness of this sin.

Only long after the persecution of Decius was readmission of the *lapsi* ("the fallen") allowed (Cyprian, *Epistula* 57). After the conversion of Constantine, apostasy became a civil offense punishable by law. The edicts of the Theodosian Code testify to this severity. "Those Christians who have become pagans will be deprived of the power and right to make testaments and every testament of such decedent . . . shall be rescinded by the annulment of its foundation" (26.7.1). Ten years later two edicts directed that persons having betrayed the holy faith shall be segregated from the community of all men, shall not have testamentary capacity, shall not inherit, shall forfeit their position and status, and shall be branded with perpetual infamy.

It is important to note that an edict of 383 CE explicitly mentions Manichaeism in the same context as pagan temples and Jewish rites. Christians simply carried on the persecution of Manichaeans started by Diocletian in 297 CE. The Manichaean teachers were to be punished, the attendants of their assemblies to become infamous, and their houses and habitations in which the doctrine was taught to be expropriated by the fisc.

Apostasy in the Islamic Community. The Arabic word *murtadd* denotes the apostate and *irtidād* or *riddah* apostasy. Qur'anic texts referring to apostasy threaten the apostate with punishment in the other world. He is to expect the wrath of God "except he has been forced, while his heart has been found in the belief" (surah 16:106). A similar idea is put forward by surah 3: 82–89: those who apostatize are the true evildoers. Their reward will be the curse of God, angels, and men. They will be condemned to hell "except those who afterward return and mend their ways. God is compassionate and ready to forgive" (3:89). These early Islamic texts are less severe than the Christian laws and the later Islamic ones.

There are also in Islam some scarce references to an apocalyptic apostasy. Occasionally the apocalyptic scenarios concerning the rise of the Mahdi provide for an Antichrist called al-Dajjāl. This word, not found in the Qur'ān, is an Aramaic loanword. The Syriac version uses *daggala* to translate the *pseudochristoi* of *Matthew* 24:24. Al-Dajjāl, who will rule for a limited period, shall lead the crowds astray.

Soon after the death of Muḥammad, the Islamic view of apostasy deeply changed. Ibn 'Abbās transmitted the following as a sentence of the prophet: "He that adopts any other religion shall be put to death." But there was dissent as to whether an effort should be made to bring

the apostate to repentance before execution. The famous lawyer Mālik ibn Anas (710–795 CE), founder of the Mālikī school, adopted the view that such efforts should be restricted to those who quite frankly abandoned Islam. Those who turned to *zindīq*s ("heretics") should be killed immediately. Efforts to bring them to repentance are useless, for the sincerity of their repentance cannot be recognized because they have been infidels in secret before, while they confessed in public to be followers of Islam. The reference to *zindīq*s is very instructive. The Middle Persian term *zandik*, from which the Arabic *zindīq* is derived, derives in turn from *Zand* (the commentary of the Avesta text) and refers to Manichaean and Mazdakite heresy. As early as the reign of Bahrām II (276–293 CE), the chief of the Zoroastrian clergy, Kartēr, had ordered followers to persecute Christians and *zindīq*s. In the same way as Christians adhered to the laws taken by pagan emperors against the Manichaeans, so the Islamic conquerors carried on the pre-Islamic persecutions of the *zindīq*s. The prototype of the apostate was the heretic. The numerous persecutions of the Bahā'īs in Iran since 1852 testify to the severity of this Islamic law. The apostates must be killed, their property confiscated, and their marriages annulled.

[*For a discussion of the ostracism of a member of a religious community for religious reasons, see* Expulsion.]

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APOSTLES. The word *apostle* is known mainly from the Christian religion as a title of a religious leader, especially in early Christianity. The origin of the word, the concept for which it stands, and its specific expressions in various religious traditions are far more complex than is usually assumed. The term itself is derived from the Greek *apostolos* (Heb., *shaliaḥ*; Lat., *apostolus*) and means "messenger," "envoy," either in a secular or a religious sense (messenger of a deity).

The basic concept of the messenger is simple: "Everyone who is sent by someone is an apostle of the one who sent him" (Origen, *In Ioannem* 32.17). This can refer to the legal and administrative institution of envoys and ambassadors as well as to highly theological expressions of messengers sent by a deity into the world to bring a message of salvation. Concrete expressions of both these concepts are influenced by different cultural and religious presuppositions. Although these presuppositions exercise continuous influence even in different religious traditions, there is room for specialized developments.

"At present the question as to the origin and the idea of the apostolate is one of the most intricate and difficult problems of New Testament scholarship." This statement was first made by Erich Haupt in 1896 and has been reiterated by twentieth-century scholars, in spite of numerous studies on the subject. The main causes for the problem are the limited sources, in particular from the earliest stages of the development in primitive Christianity, and the confusion caused by the several expressions of a basic concept found as early as the New Testament itself.

The New Testament sources show an advanced stage, not the beginning, of the development of the concept of apostleship. In fact, the New Testament contains several different and competing expressions of the concept which have begun to merge with one another. This state of affairs is also bound up with the definition of apostleship, which was in dispute as early as the time of Paul.

Apostles as Missionaries. A number of New Testament passages refer to apostles as traveling missionaries. Their title and function is described, for example, in *2 Corinthians* 8:23 (cf. *Phil.* 2:25) as "envoys of the churches." These envoys were elected or appointed by the people they were supposed to represent (cf. *2 Cor.* 8:6, 8:16–23). This process of appointment does not necessarily exclude divine intervention (cf. *Acts* 13:1–3). Apparently, the early Christian mission was carried out to a large extent by these missionary apostles, some of whom may have been women, although the evidence for women is uncertain. The task of these apostles included preaching the gospel and administering the newly founded churches, but no clear job description is found in the New Testament (cf. *1 Cor.* 9:5, 12:28; *2 Cor.* 11:13; *Rom.* 16:1–23; see also *Didache* 11.3–11.6).

Jesus' Disciples as Apostles. A more specialized concept of *apostle* is mentioned in *Galatians* 1:17, 1:19, and *1 Corinthians* 9:5 (cf. *1 Cor.* 15:7), where the former disciples of Jesus are called apostles. Apparently this title was given to those disciples who had experienced a vision of the risen Christ (*1 Cor.* 9:1, 15:3–8), but the situation is unclear because in the decisive passage, *1 Corinthians* 15:3–7, concepts that were originally different have been merged: *1 Corinthians* 15:5 names Cephas and the Twelve, *1 Corinthians* 15:7 names James "and all the apostles" as the recipients of the visions, while *1 Corinthians* 15:6 speaks of the "500 brothers" without calling them disciples of Jesus or apostles. Some New Testament writers, especially Luke, identify the disciples of Jesus (or apostles) with "the Twelve," originally a different leadership institution (*Mk.* 3:16–19, *Mt.* 10:2–4, *Lk.* 6:14–16, *Acts* 1:13, and, differently, *1 Cor.* 15:5). The names of the disciples who were counted among the Twelve differ to some extent in the tradition (cf. *Acts* 6:2; *Mk.* 14:10 and parallels, 14:43 and parallels; *Jn.* 6:71, 12:4, 20:24). When Luke, author of *Luke* and *Acts*, limits the Twelve to the disciples of the historical Jesus, he in effect denies the title of apostle to Paul (except *Acts* 14:4 and 14:14, where Paul and Barnabas, from an older source, are called apostles). Luke also refers to the twelve apostles as the leaders of the Jerusalem church (e.g., *Acts* 4:35–37, 5:2, 5:27–32), an assignment that conflicts with their role as missionaries. In *Acts* 1:21–22, Luke states what for him, and no doubt for others in early Christianity, are the criteria for apostleship: an apostle is "one of the men who have been our companions during all the time when the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning with the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us, a witness of his resurrection together with us." However, these criteria are a later construction, designed to limit the concept to those who were eyewitnesses (*Lk.* 1:2) and thus to curtail the increasing confusion about the nature and authority of apostles.

Paul the Apostle. The origin of Paul's apostleship is still as puzzling as it was in early Christianity. If the criteria of *Acts* 1:21–22 are applied, Paul does not qualify as an apostle. In fact, Paul's claim to apostleship was disputed in much of early Christianity (*1 Cor.* 9:2, 15:9–10). At the beginning of his Christian career, Paul worked as a missionary apostle with his mentor Barnabas (*Acts* 9:27, 13:1–3, 14:4, 14:14; cf. *Gal.* 1:15–2:14). However, the title used by Paul in his letters, "called apostle of Christ Jesus" (*1 Cor.* 1:1), expresses an understanding of his own apostleship different from the understanding of Luke. Despite the evidence provided by Paul, the origin and background of this title are to some extent still a mystery. Since Paul did not qualify under the normal definition, his own title presupposes a critical reinterpretation and redefinition of the entire concept of apostleship. In his earliest letter, *1 Thessalonians*, Paul does not use the title. It appears first in the prescript of *Galatians* (1:1): "Paul, apostle not from men nor through [a] man but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead" (cf. *1 Cor.* 1:1, *2 Cor.* 1:1, *Rom.* 1:1–7). This new title became the standard in the Pauline churches (*Col.* 1:1; *Eph.* 1:1; *1 Tm.* 1:1, 2:7; *2 Tm.* 1:1, 1:11; *Ti.* 1:1).

By this redefinition Paul in effect claimed to be more than an ordinary missionary apostle; he claimed the same rank and authority as the former disciples of Jesus (cf. *Gal.* 1:17; *1 Cor.* 9:1–5, 15:1–10), indeed, a higher authority. His letters testify, however, that he encountered considerable difficulties obtaining recognition that his apostolic authority was legitimate. His claim seems to have initiated bitter controversy about the question of who were the true and who were the false apostles (cf. *2 Cor.* 11:13). Paul's apostleship was accepted fully only after his death as a martyr, when Peter and Paul came to be regarded as the great founder figures of early Christian history. Jewish Christianity, however, never recognized Paul as a legitimate apostle.

Paul's claim to be the "apostle of the gentiles" (*Rom.* 11:13; cf. *Rom.* 1:5–7, 1:13–15) implied that he had a unique position in the church. Sent out by the risen Christ, who had appeared to him and appointed him (*Gal.* 1:15–16), he served as Christ's messenger, representative, and imitator on earth in an almost exclusive sense (for the concept of *mimētēs*, or "imitator," see *1 Thessalonians* 1:6, 2:14 and *1 Corinthians* 4:16, 11:1). His assignment was not only to spread the gospel and found churches; his entire physical and spiritual existence was to become an epiphany of the crucified and

resurrected Christ (cf. *Gal.* 6:17; *2 Cor.* 2:14–5:21, 13:3–4; *Phil.* 3:10). Paul's apostolic office had a firm position in the history of salvation as well as in the redemption of the cosmos. At the Last Judgment, he expected to serve as the representative of his churches before the judgment seat of Christ (*2 Cor.* 11:2; cf. *1 Cor.* 1:8; *1 Thes.* 2:10, 5:23; *Phil.* 2:15; also *Col.* 1:22, *Eph.* 5:27).

Paul's concept of apostleship emerged from intensive struggle in the early church. In this struggle his own theological ideas about apostleship underwent profound changes. This process was also informed by other notions. Geo Widengren has shown that Paul's concept of apostle has its closest parallels, and most probably antecedents, in Syriac gnosticism. In my study *Der Apostel Paulus und die sokratische Tradition*, I have shown that Paul was deeply influenced by the Socratic tradition, in which Socrates figured as a messenger sent by the deity. Thus Paul's concept of apostleship is a highly complex and composite creation that reflects the struggles of his own career as well as early Christianity's conflicts about the legitimacy and authority of its leadership. [*See also the biography of Paul.*]

Lists of Early Christian Apostles. The struggle about the apostolic authority is reflected also in the lists of the apostles, which differ to a considerable degree. *Mark* 3:16–19, *Luke* 6:14–16, and *Acts* 1:13–26 give diverse accounts. The history of the lists of apostles continues in the second century, sometimes reflecting the differing interests of Christian groups. Confusion about who was and was not an apostle is found in other parts of the New Testament as well. Was James, "the brother of the Lord" (*Gal.* 1:19), an apostle? While Barnabas is called apostle, together with Paul, in *Acts* 14:4 and 14:14, Paul never calls him by this name (cf. *Gal.* 2:1–10, 2:13; *1 Cor.* 9:6). Does he want to avoid any reference to an earlier concept of apostleship (cf. *Acts* 15:36–40, *Gal.* 2:13)? On the other hand, Paul speaks of missionary apostles when the difference between them and him is clear.

Christ as Apostle. Christ is called an apostle only once in the New Testament: "Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession" (*Heb.* 3:1). This christological concept is late, but it may have older roots. There is a peculiar situation in the Fourth Gospel, where Christ is never called apostle but functions as a messenger from God (cf., however, *John* 13:16: "Truly, truly I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is an apostle greater than the one who sent him"). Christ's entire mission is described by the technical term *apostellō* ("send"). He is the Logos and Son of God who was sent by God the Father into this world (*Jn.* 1:6, 3:17, 3:34, 5:36–38, 6:29, 6:57, 10:36, 17:3, 17:8, 17:18, 17:21, 17:23, 20:21; cf. *1 Jn.* 4:9, 4:10, 4:14). He in turn sends

out his own disciples (*Jn.* 4:38, 17:18), the Twelve, who are, however, not called apostles (*Jn.* 6:67, 6:70, 6:71, 20:24). It appears that the title of apostle has been avoided by the Fourth Gospel. Because the similarity between the Johannine Christology and the Pauline concept of apostle is so strong, the answer to the question of why the Fourth Gospel is not interested in the title of apostle may have something to do with the still unexplained relationship between Pauline and Johannine Christianity. The christological concept of apostle is found later, in the second century, in Justin Martyr (*1 Apology* 12.9, 63.5) and subsequently in patristic sources. [*See also* Jesus.]

Mani and Muḥammad as Apostles. Mani, founder of the third-century movement of Manichaeism, called by his followers "apostle of Jesus Christ," "apostle of light," and "father of all apostles," was believed to be the last of a series of apostles. [*See also* Manichaeism *and the biography of Mani.*] Mani conceived his apostleship in strongly Pauline terms, but made fuller use of an older prototype. Geo Widengren has shown the roots of this prototype in Syriac gnosticism. In heterodox Jewish Christianity, the still mysterious figure of Elchasai seems to represent a similar type. It appears that the Manichaeans drew their concept of the apostleship of Mani not only from Paul but also from a broader spectrum of ideas, perhaps the same spectrum that informed Paul when he formulated his concept of apostleship.

Muḥammad called himself "apostle of God" *(rasūl Allāh).* As such, he occupied a unique position between God and the faithful and considered himself the "last messenger of God." According to the Qurʾān Muḥammad is the bringer of light, illuminating the scriptures for the enlightened (5:18, 9:32–33). On the other hand, Muḥammad can call others by the same title, "apostle of God." Later this function seems to have influenced the figure of the imam. [*See also* Muḥammad.]

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HANS DIETER BETZ

APOTHEOSIS

APOTHEOSIS is the conferring, through official, ritual, or iconographic means, of the status of an immortal god upon a mortal person. The Greek verb *apotheoun* appears first in the writings of the historian Polybius, which date from the second century BCE. The noun *apotheōsis* is found for the first time in Cicero, though it may have existed already under some form or another in the Classical Greek world. It is during the Hellenistic epoch, however, that *apotheōsis* takes on new forms that display the stamp of the Roman cult of emperors and of the dead.

Origins. In principle, the immortal and blessed condition of the gods differentiates them radically from human nature. However, the Greeks regarded as "divine" *(theios)* the man whose outstanding qualities set him individually apart from the commonplace. The heroization of founders of cities or of benefactors and peacemakers assured them a kind of official cult, but only posthumously. Recipients of such honor included Brasidas, Miltiades, Gelon and Hiero I of Syracuse, Theron, and Timoleon. However, if genius, virtue, and political or military success embody divine potential in exceptional men, it is especially so while they are living. Con-

sequently, there is no need to wait for their death before heaping upon them such homage as is accorded the gods *(isotheoi timai)*, yet without identifying them with deities. Such was the case with Lysander after the victory of Aegospotami in 405 BCE: dedicated to him were statues, altars, chants, and sacred games that raised him to the status of the Olympians.

Aristotle grants that superiority in valor or virtue secures for certain people the honor of being counted among the gods *(Nicomachean Ethics* 7.1.2). The Hellenistic ideology of the savior-sovereign, beneficent and *euergetēs*, derives directly from this concept. The Stoics would apply it generally to people who excelled in services rendered, "beneficiis excellentes viros." Pliny the Elder would make this general statement: "In order to be a god, a mortal must give aid to other mortals; this is the path to eternal glory." It was the *virtus* of civilizing heroes that earned apotheosis for Herakles, for the Dioscuri, and for Dionysos. Philosophers, wise men, and miracle workers (among them Pythagoras and Empedocles, and later Plato, Epicurus, and a number of others) were regarded as god-men, benefactors of humanity. The case of the young gnostic Epiphanes, adored as a god after his death for being the founder of the Carpocratian sect, exhibits the same process.

Alexander, the Diadochi, and Hellenistic Royalty. In dedicating funeral solemnities, of which some elements (particularly the eagles) prefigure certain aspects of imperial Roman apotheosis, to the memory of his friend Hephaestion, Alexander established a cult for him, ordering that sacrifice be made to him "as to a god of the highest order" (Diodorus Siculus, 17.114–115). His funeral pyre with five levels presaged the *rogus consecrationis* of the Caesars. It has been suggested that it was Alexander who proposed to the Diadochi ("successors") the plan for his own posthumous consecration. Indeed, the tomb of the conquering Macedonian became the site of a cult at Alexandria that corresponded to that of the hero *ktistēs*, or "founder." However, the Ptolemies made of it a state cult that deified the dead king by allotting to him the service of a namesake priest. Like the Olympians, Alexander was to be honored fully as a god. (His name was not preceded by the title *theos*, which fundamentally differentiated him from the Lagides kings.) When the first of the Ptolemies died, his son dedicated a temple to him as a "savior-god." The first of the Seleucids was similarly deified in 280 BCE by Antiochus I. The divinization of dead queens and kings, which was connected with the cult of Alexander by following the categories of Greek mythology, was legitimized by proclaiming that Arsinoë had been borne away by the Dioscuri, Ptolemy II by Zeus, and Berenice by Aphrodite (Wilcken, 1938, p. 318). This representation of divine

abductions would long survive in the funerary imagery of the Roman era.

The posthumous deification of sovereigns that developed during the third century BCE coincides both chronologically and ideologically with the success of euhemerism. In a revolutionary book entitled *Sacred Scripture*, Euhemeros of Messene declared that religions derive from the homage rendered to beneficent kings or to civilizing conquerors. It is the epoch that witnesses the popularization of the myth of Dionysos roaming through Asia for the purpose of propagating the use of wine and also of spreading, like Alexander, Hellenic culture. Yet parallel (or correlative) to this concept—basically traditional—of the hero-*euergetēs*, there is affirmed the idea of the living god, incarnate in the active person of the sovereign. Already in 324 BCE, Alexander had laid claim to this deification: it involved a political idea, that of the unity of a universal and cosmopolitan empire in need of a religious foundation in the person of the king himself, as was later the case in the persons of the Caesars. In Egypt, the process took root in the local practice of identifying the pharaoh with Horus and of adoring him as the "son of Re." The Greeks compared the Ptolemies to Zeus, Dionysos, Apollo, Hermes, and Poseidon, and their wives to Hera, Aphrodite, Isis, and Demeter. In the same way, Antiochus I was compared to Zeus Nikator, his son to Apollo Soter. The notion was also entertained of the reincarnation of this or that deity in the person of the sovereign: Ptolemy XIII and Mithradates VI Eupator were each regarded as a "new Dionysos." Alexander too had been a "new Dionysos," a "new Herakles."

Like the Lagides, the kings of Syria and Pergamum instituted a dynastic cult alongside local cults of sovereign founders of cities. Each satrapy had its own high priest for the royal cult, just as during the Roman era each province would have its own *archiereus* for the imperial cult. This divinization was sanctioned through appeal to genealogy: the Lagides descended from Herakles or from Dionysos. There was no hesitation in proclaiming Demetrios Poliorcetes as "son of Poseidon and Aphrodite." The epodic hymn that the Athenians sang to him in 307 BCE serves as a revealing document of the new conception of deities: "You, we see you here present, not as an idol of wood or stone, but really here." The apotheosis of living beings, visible or "epiphanous," appeared as one consequence (among others) of the decline of the rule of the cities and of the cults entwined with them. The erosion of belief in the traditional gods benefited the ideology, indeed the theology, of the leader as savior and peacemaker, as effective and direct protector of the people who needed him. The same phe-

nomenon repeated and expanded itself three centuries later to the advantage of the Roman emperors.

The Roman World. In Roman religions, the dead, as the *manes*, are collectively and indiscriminately deified. The "sacrifices" offered to them have a negative purpose: to help them rest quietly under the ground so that they will not trouble the world of the living. Yet, under Hellenic influence, this cult tended, beginning in the second century BCE, to coincide with a kind of heroization in the case of more or less impressive individuals, such as the Scipios. The sarcophagus containing the remains of Scipio Barbatus has the shape of a monumental altar that attests to the deceased being a *deus parens* (V. Saladino, *Der Sarkophag des Lucius Cornelius Scipio Barbatus*, Würzburg, 1970, pp. 24f.). The Greek word *apotheōsis* appears in Cicero with reference to the posthumous divinization with which he attempted to honor his daughter Tullia. In the *Dream of Scipio*, the same Cicero promises astral immortality to meritorious statesmen, in conformity with the Hellenistic ideology of the hero-*euergetēs*.

The altar-shaped tomb enters into widespread usage in the first century BCE (W. Altmann, *Die römische Grabaltare der Kaiserzeit*, Berlin, 1905), especially among freed slaves. The ornamentation is also significant, particularly the eagles of apotheosis, thought to bear the soul of the deceased to heaven, like the eagle of Zeus that abducted Ganymede.

In freeing the spiritual person from his carnal shell, the funeral pyre served to aid his ascension to the ethereal realm of the gods. *A fortiori*, being struck by lightning was a measure of apotheosis, as the myths of Semele, Herakles, and Asklepios show. In Egypt, drowning in the Nile assured the same result, after the example of Osiris. Yet the mode of death or the funeral rite mattered little. The mythological imagery of the sarcophagi that surpassed altars as the sepulchral fashion confirmed indirectly or by allusion the apotheosis of the deceased. Scenes of military life, hunting scenes (chases for lion or boar), and intellectual activity (Muses and philosophers) also symbolized heroization through *virtus*. Finally, untimely deaths *(funus acerbum)*, as illustrated by various myths or allegories, were thought to assure the apotheosis of these dead, whom the Greeks called the *ahōroi*.

Imperial Apotheosis. The astral apotheosis of Caesar, cremated in the Forum and become a comet *(sidus Iulium)*, shone upon Octavian, Divi Filius. However, it was not until the death of Augustus that the ritual of "consecration" of the emperors was inauguarated. [*See* Emperor's Cult.] The Senate would gather to confer (or not confer) the honors of apotheosis upon the deceased

emperor. An immense four-tiered pyre would be built upon the Field of Mars, as depicted in coins of the second and third centuries CE. This *rogus consecrationis* was constructed of planks enclosing combustible materials and was decorated on the outside with costly embroidered fabrics adorned with gold, paintings, embossments, and garlands. A funeral pallet bore the cadaver of the new *divus*, covered with spices, fragrant fruits, and perfume essences. Around the pyre the priests and horseman would move in a circle: this *decursio* is depicted in raised relief on the pedestal of the column of Antoninus Pius. The new emperor would then take a torch to kindle the pyre, and everyone participating would do the same. Finally, from the top of the pyre an eagle would take flight as if bearing the soul of the deceased Caesar to the heavenly Olympus. Coins, cameos, and the vault of the Arch of Titus in Rome illustrate this posthumous flight. However, on the pedestal of the column of Antoninus Pius, it is the spirit of eternity (Aiōn) that carries Antoninus and Faustina away on its wings (Turcan, 1975, pp. 305ff.). After the ceremony, a witness would attest to having seen the consecrated prince soar into the air. Thereafter, the deceased would be entitled to a cult served by a priestly corps comprising members of the imperial family. The ceremonial was maintained, except for certain changes necessitated by the adoption of burial, up to the end of the third century (Turcan, 1958, pp. 323ff.). This apotheosis was incompatible with Christianity. Yet upon the death of Constantine, coins of consecration were still struck on which the emperor was pictured in a chariot, extending his hand toward God's hand emerging from the sky.

The extension of the empire and of the powers of the emperor sacralized his function, and indeed his person and that of the empress, and they were compared in word and picture to the divinities of the traditional pantheon. However, even though the Hellenistic kings and the Caesars had themselves adored while alive, still there was no true apotheosis except posthumously. For, as a Hermetic writing states, "The soul cannot be divinized so long as it remains in a human body" (*Corpus Hermeticum* 10.6).

[*See also* Deification.]

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APPARITIONS. *See* Hierophany *and* Visions; *see also* Ghosts.

'AQEDAH. *See* Isaac.

'AQIDAH. *See* Creeds, *article on* Islamic Creeds.

'AQIVA' BEN YOSEF (c. 50–c. 135 CE), Palestinian tanna. 'Aqiva' lived during the time of the transformation of Palestinian Judaism from a religion centered on the Temple of Jerusalem to one focused on the study of Torah, the totality of God's revelation to Moses and the

Jewish people. 'Aqiva' was born shortly before the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE and died during the Bar Kokhba Revolt (132–135), the Jews' last attempt to wrest freedom from the Romans. Described as a poor shepherd, 'Aqiva', encouraged by his wife, supposedly began his rabbinic studies at the age of forty and learned the alphabet together with his young son (*Avot de-Rabbi Natan* 6; B.T., *Ket.* 62b–63a, *Ned.* 50a).

The influence of 'Aqiva' touched all areas of rabbinic thought and all levels of rabbinic lore. The Talmud relates that

> the anonymous statements in the Mishnah [the earliest collection of rabbinic teachings] should be attributed to Me'ir, the anonymous statements in the Tosefta [a document that parallels the Mishnah but that did not achieve its official status] should be attributed to Nehemyah, the anonymous statements in *Sifra'* [an early collection of exegetical statements on *Leviticus*] should be attributed to Yehudah, the anonymous statements in *Sifrei* [an early collection of exegetical comments on *Numbers* and *Deuteronomy*] should be attributed to Shim'on, and all of them are according to the opinion of 'Aqiva'.   (B.T., *San.* 86a)

The major sages after 'Aqiva' traced their intellectual heritage back to him. Even the patriarch Gamli'el of Yavneh acquiesced to the knowledge of 'Aqiva' (B.T., *Ber.* 27b–28a), and the greatest patriarch, Yehudah ha-Nasi', studied with the five major pupils of 'Aqiva' (B.T., *Meg.* 20a). Even Moses is said to have asked God why he revealed the Torah through him if he had such a one as 'Aqiva' (B.T., *Men.* 29b).

Scholars such as Jacob Brull, Jacob Zuri, and Zacharias Frankel attribute to 'Aqiva' a central role in the codification of the Mishnah; however, Jacob Neusner and his students have raised serious questions about the traditional view of how the Mishnah came into being and the role of 'Aqiva' in that process. Compilation of the early *midrashim* (collections of exegetical statements) by 'Aqiva' also has been the subject of scholarly debate since the time of David Hoffmann (late nineteenth century) and Chanoch Albeck.

The traditional picture of 'Aqiva' as a biblical exegete goes beyond the assigning of particular early collections of exegetical statements to him. It is commonly claimed that 'Aqiva' represents a major trend in early rabbinic biblical commentary (Heschel, 1962). He is said to have followed an imaginative and creative form of biblical exegesis and to have derived his comments from every aspect of the biblical text, including the shapes of the letters (B.T., *Men.* 29b) and the peculiarities of biblical Hebrew, such as the repetition of words and phrases and the appearance of certain prepositions, conjunc-

tions, and adverbs (B.T., *Hag.* 12a, *Shav.* 26a; *Gn. Rab.* 1.14, 22.2, 53.20). The exegetical activity of 'Aqiva' is often contrasted to that of Yishma'e'l ben Elisha', who is said to have followed a more rational approach to the biblical text. For example, the repetition of "a man, a man" in *Leviticus* 22:4 led 'Aqiva' to conclude that the uncircumcised were included in the prohibition against eating the Passover sacrifice, while Yishma'e'l proved this point by a citation of *Leviticus* 22:10 and *Exodus* 12:45 (*Sifra'*, Emor 4.18). However, recent work on the exegetical traditions of Yishma'e'l and 'Aqiva' (Porton, 1976–1982) has demonstrated that the methods used by these two rabbis were more similar than most scholars have thought.

Just as the rabbinic tradition assigned 'Aqiva' a prominent place in the compilations of the legal and exegetical collections, so it assigned him a pivotal role in the formation of the mystical texts of Judaism. He is included, along with Ben 'Azz'ai, Elisha' ben Avuyah, and Ben Zoma', among those "who entered the garden," which is taken as a reference to mystical teachings, and he alone is said to have "left in peace" (B.T., *Hag.* 14b and parallels). His importance in the mystical tradition is seen in the attribution of sayings to him in the Heikhalot literature (collections of visions of those who traveled through God's palace) and by the attribution of *Heikhalot zuṭratti* to him.

'Aqiva' did not limit himself to the sphere of the intellect. He was pictured as being actively involved in the Bar Kokhba Revolt. In fact, 'Aqiva' is normally said to have claimed that Bar Kokhba was the Messiah and to have been the major rabbinical supporter of the uprising (J.T., *Ta'an.* 68d). The rabbinic texts claim that he suffered a martyr's death at the hands of the Romans during the revolt (B.T., *Ber.* 61b). However, Peter Schafer has raised serious objections to the scholarly consensus concerning the revolt and the role of 'Aqiva' in it.

Although recent scholarship has challenged many of the details regarding the life of 'Aqiva' that are found in rabbinic texts, it does not detract from the impression he made on his contemporaries and on subsequent generations. The picture we find in the documents of ancient Judaism is one of an extraordinary talent. He is described as affecting every aspect of rabbinic thought—legal, exegetical, mystical, and even philosophical. "Man has free will," 'Aqiva' is reported to have said, "but all is foreseen by God" (*Avot* 3.16). His rise from poverty to greatness must have been an inspiration to many—so much so that he was placed at the center of the important historical and intellectual events of his time.

[*See also* Tannaim.]

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GARY G. PORTON

AQUINAS, THOMAS. *See* Thomas Aquinas.

ARABIAN RELIGIONS. The advent of Islam in the seventh century of the common era marked a clear division in the political and religious history of Arabia. In the eyes of Muslim authors, pre-Islamic time is viewed as the Jāhilīyah ("age of ignorance"), a term applied to pre-Islamic history within and without Arabia. From a religious standpoint, this term corresponds especially to the polytheistic beliefs and rituals that to a large extent characterized religious life in Arabia.

In addition to polytheism, Judaism and Christianity were practiced in Arabia in pre-Islamic times. The second Abyssinian invasion of South Arabia in 525 was prompted by—among other factors—the anti-Christian excesses of Dhū Nuwās, the Jewish Ḥimyarī ruler. A Jewish colony had long been established at Yathrib (Medina) when Muḥammad emigrated there from Mecca in 622. There is no proof that Zoroastrianism had been practiced among pre-Islamic Arabs, but Sasanid rule over the area from circa 575 to 628 must have resulted in the practice of this religion within the Persian garrisons in South Arabia.

Historical Background. Known in antiquity as Arabia Felix, South Arabia was a fertile area with elaborate waterworks that supported the rise of a number of states in pre-Islamic times: Ma'īn (the Minaeans), Saba (the land of Sheba), Qatabān, and Hadhramaut. These later formed the Ḥimyarī kingdom (capital, Zafār), which fell to the Abyssinians in 525. The Sabaeans were mentioned in the annals of Assyrian kings as far back as the eighth century BCE, and the peoples of Arabia Felix were known to classical writers as early as the end of the fourth century BCE. Strabo preserved an excerpt from Eratosthenes that mentions Minaeans, Sabaeans, Qatabānians, and Hadhramautis, and he himself gave an account of the expedition of Aelius Gallus into the area in 24 BCE. References to these peoples are also found in the anonymous *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (between c. 95 and 130 CE) and in the works of Pliny (c. 77 CE) and Ptolemy (c. 150 CE).

This region, known as the land of incense, maintained an active trade with Egypt, Abyssinia, and India. The *Periplus* mentions the South Arabian ports of Okēlis, Kanē, and Muza as the main trading places for Egyptian cloth and wine, African ivory, and Indian spices. Saba and Hadhramaut are mentioned in the Bible; the former gained fame as the land of Sheba, whose queen paid a visit to King Solomon in Jerusalem and is described in the Bible as "having a great retinue and camels bearing spices and very much gold and precious stones" (*2 Chr.* 9:1–12). Excavations in 1955–1956 and 1960 of the sites of Yeha and Melazo (in Ethiopia) that yielded a number of Sabaean inscriptions revealed that by the fifth century BCE Sabaean immigrants had established themselves in northeastern Ethiopia.

The capitals of the South Arabian states were Qarnaw (Ma'īn), Timna' (Qatabān), Shabwa (Hadhramaut), and Ṣirwāḥ and Ma'rib (the two capitals of Saba). Some scholars date the rise of the first South Arabian state as far back as 1200 BCE, but the chronology of the rise and fall of these states is not yet well established. Except in Ma'īn, the rulers of these states bore the theocratic title of *mukarrib* ("priest-king"). With the consolidation and expansion of the Sabaean state, this title changed to *malik* ("king").

Although Mecca was not a capital city, it was an important economic center, linking trade routes from South Arabia with the great cities of Syria and Iraq. It was also an important religious center for the tribes of the Hejaz (western Arabia). Later, this area became the cradle of Islam, a monotheistic religion that was to eradicate all traces of paganism. We are told by al-Azraqī that as many as 360 idols were destroyed in Mecca following its capture by the prophet Muḥammad and his supporters in 630.

In the northern Hejaz, a Minaean colony flourished in al-'Ulā. Farther north, from Madā'in Ṣāliḥ to Petra, are the temples and rock-cut funerary monuments of the Nabateans, Arabs whose kingdom existed from the first century BCE until its fall to the Romans in 106 CE. An-

other North Arabian kingdom was founded around the Syrian city of Tadmor (Palmyra) and is known for its role in fending off Sasanid expansion into the area. It reached its zenith from about the middle of the second century CE to 272, when it was annexed by the Romans following the defeat of its queen, Zenobia.

Religion. South Arabian religion was dominated by astral worship. Each people worshiped its own moon god: Wadd (the Minaeans), 'Amm (the Qatabānians), Sīn (the Hadhramautis), and Ilumquh (the Sabaeans). Other lunar deities are mentioned in a number of South Arabian inscriptions, but the consensus among specialists is that they represented a particular aspect or function of each of the aforementioned moon gods, and were not distinct deities. Thus Hawbas could be invoked along with Ilumquh, Anbay or Warakh with 'Amm, Hawl with Sīn, and Nahastāb with Wadd. The specific features of each of these gods is still a matter for discussion: Gonzague Ryckmans (1951) considers that Hawbas represented the "ebb and flow" aspect of the moon god, and Hawl that of "recurrence," and that the meaning of the name *Anbay* was "spokesman." The nature of Nahastāb is not clear, but Albert Jamme (1947) thinks that he was probably a moon god.

The solar deity was worshiped as a goddess and is mentioned mostly with a number of attributes beginning with the word *dhāt* ("endowed with, possessing"). The different names under which she appears are generally viewed as reflecting aspects of the sun according to seasonal changes: Dhāt Himyam ("the blazing one") and Dhāt Ba'dān ("the faraway one") in Sabaean inscriptions. Among the Hadhramautis, she is known as Shams ("sun"). Occasionally, she is associated with the name of a local temple: Dhāt Nashq and Dhāt Zahrān, in some Minaean and Qatabānian inscriptions.

The third major South Arabian divinity was 'Athtar, the male equivalent of the stellar deity Venus. He is considered by most scholars to be the god of irrigation, and he appears in inscriptions under the common name of 'Athtar but more often with an epithet or in a construct denoting a location: 'Athtar Sharqān ("'Athtar of the east"), 'Athtar Shāriq ("'Athtar rising from the east"), and 'Athtar Dhū Qabdim ("'Athtar, lord of Qabd"). The invocation of 'Athtar before the other deities is common, especially in the concluding formulas of votive inscriptions.

The triad of moon god, sun god, and 'Athtar worshiped by the Sabaeans of Arabia is also encountered in Sabaean inscriptions found in Ethiopia. An inscription from the site of Melazo (a few miles southeast of Aksum) mentions Ilumquh next to Hawbas; another is dedicated to 'Athtar ('Astar) alone, and a third to 'Astar, Hawbas, Ilumquh, Dhāt Himyam, and Dhāt Ba'dān (see

A. J. Drewes, "Les inscriptions de Melazo," *Annales d'Éthiopie* 3, 1959, pp. 83–99).

A lack of dated inscriptions impedes a better understanding of the religious evolution of South Arabia. In the extant inscriptions, a host of deities are mentioned individually or in combination with one or more members of the triad. Their nature and position in the pantheon remain very sketchy, however, because of the disparity and wide variety of these "secondary" deities. Some of the deities, with their probable meanings, are Balw ("death, misfortune"), Dhū Samāwī ("lord of the sky [heaven]"), Halfān ("oath, contract"), Halīm ("the wise one"), Nasr ("eagle"), Rahman ("the compassionate one"), and Samī' ("the one who listens").

The temple formed the cult center among the sedentary settlements in this part of the peninsula. Each temple had a keeper, whose functions have not been clarified but who is thought to have assumed certain religious duties; the term *sacerdotal* is inappropriate here owing to our present lack of knowledge of the subject. Among South Arabian temples, two are well known: the temple of Huraydah (Hureidha) in Hadhramaut, dedicated to Sīn, the local moon god, and the temple of 'Awwām (Haram Bilqīs) in Ma'rib, dedicated to Ilumquh, the Sabaean moon god. The remains indicate that these were elaborate structures consisting of a large courtyard and several partitions for cultic purposes.

The Hejaz. The nomadic way of life and the tribal organization left their impact: the multitude of deities worshiped in the Hejaz were tribal deities. Each tribe had its own god or goddess, represented generally in the form of a baetyl, a sacred stone. The mobility of nomadic life led to the adoption of suitable cultic practices. Thus, the members of a tribe could worship their deity anywhere by investing any form of stone with the divine. This "substitute" was referred to as a *nusub* (pl., *ansāb*). Although the cult of baetyls was the most important religious feature, there are a few examples of the veneration of trees and spirits. The Muslim author al-Azraqī noted that the Quraysh tribe worshiped Dhāt Anwāt, a "huge green tree" located at Hunayn, on the road from Mecca to Taif. Al-'Uzzā, the major goddess of the same tribe, was believed to have been incarnated in a cluster of three acacia trees in the Hurād Valley, on the road from Mecca to Medina. The presence of these trees along seasonal migratory tracks led to their worship. As for *jinn* (spirits), a number of sources, including the Qur'ān (6:100–101), indicate that they were worshiped by Arabs in pre-Islamic times. According to Ibn al-Kalbī (trans. Faris, 1952, p. 29), the clan of Banū Mulayh of the Khuzā'a tribe was notable for *jinn* worship.

Three tribal deities were preeminent in Central Ara-

bia. These were Manāt, Allāt, and al-'Uzzā, the three goddesses mentioned in the Qur'ān (53:19–22). The most ancient of these was Manāt, who was worshiped by the Azd tribe and whose sanctuary was at Qudayd, on the Red Sea, near Mecca. The cult of Manāt was also popular in North Arabia, where the name of this deity appears in inscriptions in its archaic form, *Manawat*. In Palmyra, she was associated with the ancient god Bel Hamon; "the inscriptions presumably define her personality as that of a goddess who appropriates gifts to her worshippers and presides over chance and luck" (Teixidor, 1979, p. 17). A Nabatean inscription from the tomb of Kam Kam (Cantineau, vol. 2, 1932, p. 26) invokes Manāt and Allāt together with Dushara, the Nabatean sun god.

Allāt was the goddess of the Thaqīf tribe but was also revered by the Quraysh. Her sanctuary was at Taif and was, in the words of Ibn al-Kalbī, "a square stone." As was the case for Manāt, her cult spread to North Arabia, where she was featured as the warrior goddess. A temple was dedicated to her at Palmyra and also at Salhad (Sarhad), in the Hauran region of Syria. G. A. Cooke (1903, p. 253) believes that her cult was introduced into the Hauran by the Nabateans following their capture of Damascus in 85 BCE.

Al-'Uzzā was the goddess of the Quraysh tribe, and her cult originated later than the cults of Manāt and Allāt. She was incarnated, as mentioned above, in three trees in the Hurād Valley, where a sanctuary was dedicated to her. In North Arabia, her cult was not so extensive as those of Allāt and Manāt.

Two deities, Isāf (male) and Nā'ilah (female), seem to have been of South Arabian origin; they were worshiped as a couple. We are told by Ibn al-Kalbī and al-Azraqī that their images were placed in the proximity of the Ka'bah and were worshiped by the Khuzā'a and Quraysh tribes. The legend surrounding this couple states that they were originally two persons from the Jurhum tribe in Yemen who fornicated in the Ka'bah and as a result were turned to stone.

Five other deities, all of South Arabian provenance, are mentioned in the Qur'ān (71:23–24): Wadd, Suwā', Yaghūth, Ya'ūq, and Nasr. Of these, Wadd was the "national" god of the Minaeans. Suwā' and Nasr are mentioned by Ibn al-Kalbī (1952, pp. 8–11) and appear in a few inscriptions. According to al-Shahrastānī, Yaghūth and Ya'ūq were worshiped in Yemen.

Hubal, the most important deity of Mecca, was a god of great complexity. Unlike the deities cited above, Hubal does not seem to have been of local origin. He was a late addition to the deities worshiped in the Hejaz and is not mentioned at all in the Qur'ān despite the preeminence of his cult in Mecca. The majority of Muslim au-

thors describe him as a carnelian red statue with a broken right arm, a limb that the Quraysh tribe repaired in gold. They state that this statue was brought from Syria (according to al-Azraqī, from Mesopotamia) by 'Amr ibn Luhayy; from a passage of al-Shahrastānī it may be deduced that this occurred no earlier than the middle of the third century CE. The statue was placed in the Ka'bah and was worshiped as a god by the Arabs of the Hejaz, especially by the Quraysh tribe. It was this god who was invoked by Abū Sufyān, a leader of the Quraysh, during the battle of Uhud against Muhammad and his followers. The legend surrounding Hubal shows him as the god of rain and a warrior god. Toward the end of the pre-Islamic era he emerged especially as an intertribal warrior god worshiped by the Quraysh and the allied tribes of the Kināna and Tihāma.

The astral character of the cult was prominent among the South Arabians and also among the Palmyrenes and Nabateans. However, it is not certain that this was so among the tribes of the Hejaz. A number of Qur'anic passages, especially "Adore not the sun and the moon, but adore God who created them" (41:37), and information gathered from literary sources indicate the existence of the "worship of stars" in pre-Islamic Arabia in general. These references, however, are vague and insufficient for the identification of astral deities worshiped by the tribes of the Hejaz. There, religion was marked by the preeminence of tribal deities, a feature reflecting the nomadic way of desert life. These deities and their sacred places were as mobile as nomadic life itself, as demonstrated by the worship of *ansāb* (baetyls). The number of stone-built sanctuaries was small, and, if the Ka'bah was a prototype, they reflected the simplicity of nomadic life.

Cultic practices. It is not known whether specific rituals, such as prayers, were prescribed, and our knowledge of cultic practices is limited to the yields of excavations, including inscriptions, and to the occasional accounts of Muslim authors.

Offerings were the most common cultic practice. The worshipers offered a few valuables in recognition of the deity's care or support. Thus, a wealthy Minaean merchant made an offering of money to 'Athtar Dhū Qabdim, a Sabaean dedicated a gold camel to Dhū Samāwī, and another, a gold statue to 'Athtar Dhū Dibān. Offerings could also consist of public works, such as a water cistern or a tower. This practice was common in the Hejaz as well, with variations from one deity to another. The offerings could include a portion of the harvest, money, jewelry, or gold. Several accounts mention that worshipers gave money or camels to the keeper *(sādin)* of the Ka'bah when consulting Hubal for an oracle, while Ibn Hishām mentions that money, jewelry, gold,

and onyx were found in the sanctuary of Allāt upon its destruction in Islamic times.

Animal sacrifice, especially of sheep and camels, was most common in Arabia, and is corroborated by a number of votive inscriptions from South Arabia. The 1937–1938 excavation by Gertrude Caton Thompson of the temple of Sīn in Ḥuraydah revealed partitions that contained a number of shrines with sacrificial altars in their middle, as well as remains of animal bones. This cultic practice was widespread in the Hejaz, and it is often mentioned in early Muslim sources. Ibn al-Kalbī (1952, pp. 16–17) recounts that the prophet Muḥammad said he made, in pre-Islamic times, an offering to al-ʿUzzā consisting of a dust-colored sheep. Another passage from Ibn al-Kalbī (p. 18) implies that the flesh of the sacrificial animal was divided among those who were present at this occasion.

The sacrifice of humans was nonexistent. The Qurʾān (81:8–9) notes the rare practice of waʾd al-banāt (the burial alive of infant daughters), but this should not be viewed as a form of human sacrifice (cf. 16:58–59).

Offerings of incense and fragrances were common in South Arabia, but not in the Hejaz. Incense burners were found among the remains of the temple and tombs of Ḥuraydah, in the tombs of Timnaʿ (Qatabān), and in the Sabaean tombs excavated at Yeha (Ethiopia).

The belief in some form of an afterlife was widespread among the Arabs. Archaeological evidence from the above-mentioned excavations (which took place in 1937–1938, 1951, and 1960, respectively) tends to support this view: the excavations brought to light artifacts consisting of pottery, jewelry (mostly beads), incense burners, and a few tools and utensils. These objects were placed in the tombs for future use by the dead. Until very recently, no trace of mummification was found in South Arabian necropolises, but the discovery, at the end of 1983, of two tombs near Sanʿa (the capital of North Yemen) containing five mummies will certainly lead to a reassessment of South Arabian sepulchral practices.

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Scholarly investigation of pre-Islamic religion in South Arabia (Yemen and Hadhramaut) gained impetus toward the end of the nineteenth century through the pioneering epigraphic works of Joseph Halévy and Eduard Glaser. Our knowledge of the antiquities of the area has been expanded in this century through the efforts of scholars such as Yaḥyā al-Nāmī, Ahmed Fakhry, William F. Albright, Frank P. Albright, Gonzague Ryckmans, Jacques Ryckmans, H. St. John Philby, Wendell Phillips, Gertrude Caton Thompson, Jacqueline Pirenne, and Albert Jamme, to mention only a few. As a result of their work,

thousands of South Arabian epigraphic texts have come to light. The French Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres devoted the fourth part of its "Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum" to Ḥimyarī and Sabaean inscriptions. Three volumes of text and three of illustrations were published between 1889 and 1931. Another set of inscriptions was published from 1928 to 1938 by the Commission du "Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum" in volumes 5 to 7 of the "Répertoire d'épigraphie sémitique" (RES). These two series form the largest collections of South Arabian texts.

Next to the epigraphic sources, our knowledge of pre-Islamic religious life in Arabia is drawn from sparse Qurʾanic references and their commentaries, and from literary and historical works of early Muslim authors such as Ibn Isḥāq (d. 768), Ibn al-Kalbī (d. 819 or 821/2), al-Wāqidī (d. 823), Ibn Hishām (d. 833), Ibn Saʿd (d. 845), al-Azraqī (d. 858?), al-Ṭabarī (d. 923), and al-Shahrastānī (d. 1153). Except for the Qurʾān, these sources were not contemporaneous with the rise of Islam. One of the earliest known works was a biography of the prophet Muḥammad, Sīrat rasūl Allāh, by Ibn Isḥāq, as compiled by Ibn Hishām; an interval of about a century and a half separates it from the beginning of the new religion. Because of their retrospective view of events, these works naturally lack systematic information about pre-Islamic religions on the peninsula.

The only known work treating solely the topic of religion in pre-Islamic Arabia is the Kitāb al-aṣnām of Ibn al-Kalbī, a native of al-Kūfa, in Iraq. This work was known, prior to its publication in 1914, primarily through extensive quotations by Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 1225) in his geographical dictionary, Muʿjam al-buldān. Ibn al-Kalbī's work has been translated into English by Nabih A. Faris as The Book of Idols (Princeton, 1952). The interesting feature of Ibn al-Kalbī's work is its listing of idols and some brief information regarding rituals and tribal idol worship. The Akhbār Makkah (History of Mecca) of al-Azraqī is another important source, to which should be added the works of al-Hamdānī (d. 945), a native of Sanʿa, in Yemen. These are Ṣifat jazīrat al-ʿarab (a description of the Arabian peninsula) and Kitāb al-iklīl, of which only parts 8 and 10 are known. Part 8 has been translated by Nabih A. Faris as The Antiquities of South Arabia (1938; reprint, Westport, Conn., 1981).

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ARAMEAN RELIGION.

When the Arameans first appeared in the ancient Near East is not known. The early attestations of *Aram* as a place-name—in an inscription of Naram-Sin of Akkad at the end of the third millennium BCE, in the Mari texts of the eighteenth century BCE, and at Ugarit in the fourteenth century BCE—cannot be taken as a proof of the early existence of an independent ethnic group, even though during the first millennium some of the Aramean kings styled themselves "king of Aram." The Arameans are characterized by their names and their dialects, the novelty of which strikes the historian as he compares them with the preexistent Akkadian names and language used in Mesopotamia.

In the second half of the eleventh century the Arameans are known to have gained control of large areas of the Syrian desert and thus of its caravan routes. They succeeded in forming in northern Syria and around Damascus major confederacies in which dialects of Aramaic were spoken and written. The Aramean states spread over the great bend of the Euphrates, on the upper and lower Habor, and in the northern Syrian hinterland at Samal, Arpad, Aleppo, and Hama. Some information about the Arameans comes from biblical sources, which state that David defeated Hadadezer of Aram-Zobah (near modern Hama), whose political influence had reached as far south as Ammon in Transjordan (*2 Sm.* 8:3, 10:6), or that the continuous disputes between Judah and Israel helped the rise of Damascus as an Aramean power in Syria (Malamat, 1973, pp. 141–144). The Assyrians could not allow a threat to their hegemony in the Near East, however, so Ashurnasirpal II (883–859) and Shalmaneser III (858–824) subdued the Aramean states in northern Syria, and Tiglathpileser III (744–727) reduced Damascus to an Assyrian province.

Yet even defeated, the Arameans maintained the prestige of their language, and the gods they called on in treaties and religious inscriptions became the gods of the whole of Syria and remained so up to the first centuries CE. The massive arrival under the Persians (sixth century BCE) and the Greeks (fourth century) of Arab tribes into southern Palestine, the Hauran, Damascus, the Syrian desert, and even northern Syria did not disrupt the traditional ways of living and praying because the newcomers adopted the culture and the language of the Arameans. Any analysis of the Aramean religion must therefore take into consideration all the inscriptions written in Aramaic, from the earliest ones of the ninth century BCE down to those of the first three centuries CE (the latter are written in Syriac, a cognate language of Aramaic, and still reflect the influence of the ancient pagan cults of northern Syria).

The Cults of Hadad and Sin. A bilingual inscription (in Akkadian and Aramaic) found in 1979 at Tell Fekhariye, near Tell Halaf, on the border between Syria and Turkey, records the gratitude of Hadadyisi, ruler of Sikanu and Guzanu, to Hadad of Sikanu. Both the script and the historical context date the life-size statue of the ruler on which the text is engraved to the first part of the ninth century BCE. This is the earliest, most important text in Aramaic ever found, and the mention of the god Hadad (in Akkadian, Adad) becomes of paramount interest to the history of his cult among the Ar-

ameans. Hadad is praised in both languages in a formula that is often used to praise Adad in Akkadian inscriptions from Mesopotamia. The god is styled "the inspector of the waters of heaven and earth"; the one "who pours richness and dispenses pastureland and moisty fields to all countries." Hadad is the one "who provides the gods, his brothers, with quietness and sustenance." He, the great lord of Sikanu, is "a merciful god," a deity whose almighty providence ranks him above other gods and makes him for humans a storm god and a weather god.

Although Adad's minor position in the Mesopotamian pantheon does not compare with his counterpart's preeminence in northern Syria and among the Arameans in general, his name appears as a theophorous element in some Semitic personal names of the pre-Sargonic period; after the reigns of Sargon of Akkad (late third millennium BCE) and his grandson Naram-Sin, the first Semitic rulers to establish an empire in the Mesopotamian lands, such theophorous names became very frequent. The element *Addu* (Adad/Hadad) occurs frequently in personal names from the Syro-Mesopotamian area. Letters from Mari, on the middle Euphrates, reveal the popularity of the god at the beginning of the second millennium BCE. [*See* Adad.]

A colossal statue of Hadad was found in 1890 in a village to the northeast of Zinjirli (Turkey). According to the inscription carved on the monument, it had been erected by King Panamu of Yady (Samal, in the Zinjirli region) to acknowledge that his royal power derived from Hadad. Although Panamu was not a Semite, he gave his son a Semitic name, Barsur, and extolled Semitic gods in his inscription: besides Hadad the text lists El, the high god adored at Ugarit and in pre-Israelite Canaan; Reshef, the ancient Syrian god of pestilence and the underworld, but also of well-being (identified with Nergal in Mesopotamia and with Apollo by the Greeks); and Rakib-El, whose name can be interpreted as "charioteer of El," thus becoming a suitable epithet for the moon god, since the crescent of the moon can easily be imagined as a boat navigating across the skies. (The plausibility of this interpretation is heightened by the inscription's mention of Shamash, the sun god, right after Rakib-El, as if the intention was to show that the two celestial bodies formed Hadad's cortege.)

Panamu's dynasty is known from another Aramaic inscription, one written on the statue that King Barrakib erected to his father, Panamu II. The monarch recounted in it his father's political career and how Hadad saved him from the curse that had fallen on his dynastic family. Following the religious traditions of the family, Barrakib invoked Hadad together with Rakib-El, the dynastic god of the kings of Samal, and

Shamash. A few years later he had another inscription carved alongside a relief that represented him in Assyrian dress. The monarch asserted that "because of my father's righteousness and my own righteousness, my lord Rakib-El and my lord Tiglath-pileser seated me upon my father's throne." On a relief from Harran, in northwestern Mesopotamia, the same ruler proclaimed his faith in the moon god by declaring that his lord is the *baal* ("lord") of Harran.

At Harran the *baal* was the moon god known by the name Sin, which is a late development of the Mesopotamian name Suen. The Akkadians seem to have been responsible for introducing the name of the moon god into southern Sumer, where Suen was identified with the moon god Nanna, the city god of Ur (Roberts, 1972, p. 50), from whence the cult probably traveled to Harran with the Aramean nomads. [*See* Nanna.] The cult of the moon god attained high prominence at Harran and throughout the Syro-Mesopotamian region. But the Aramaic inscriptions portray the miscellaneous character of religious life in these lands: the funerary stelae of two priests of the moon god recovered in 1891 at Nerab (southeast of Aleppo), dated to the seventh century BCE, reveal that the priests bore Akkadian theophorous names of Sin but worshiped the moon god under his West Semitic name, Sahar.

The devotion of the Aramean population to the moon god (under whatever name) became a distinctive feature of the religiosity of northern Syria, especially when the area came under Babylonian rule after the destruction of the Assyrian empire. At the end of the seventh century, Nabopolassar (625–605) and Nebuchadrezzar (604–562) settled Babylonians in the various countries they conquered. The cult knew a glorious period under Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon (556–539), for he rebuilt Ehulhul, the sanctuary of Sin at Harran, which had been destroyed by the Medes in 610 BCE as they crushed the Assyrian remnant of the city (Lambert, 1972, p. 58). In the words of Nabonidus himself and of his mother, the priestess of the god at the sanctuary, Sin was "the king of the gods." Except for the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal (668–627), who had himself crowned at Harran, and Nabonidus, no Assyro-Babylonian king is known to have given the lord of Harran this epithet, which was usually given to the gods Ashur and Marduk (Levy, 1945–1946, pp. 417–418).

It is likely that there were close religious links between the Arameans of the province of Harran and the Arab tribes of Dedan and Teima in northern Arabia, for one of the sources relating the conquest of the Aramean states by the Assyrian king Adadnirari II (911–891) mentions the presence of three Temanite shaykhs in the area. The prolonged and probably religiously motivated

stay of Nabonidus at Teima (Lambert, 1972, p. 60) could not but strengthen these links. The Aramaic inscriptions of the sixth century BCE found at Teima attest to this to some extent, for bull heads were frequently recovered with the inscriptions, and this seems to suggest the existence of a cult of the moon among the Aramaic-speaking population of the Arabian desert (Teixidor, 1977, pp. 71–75).

Associations of Gods. The very few inscriptions that provide information about the Aramean religion during the eighth, seventh, and sixth centuries BCE record only the religious feelings of the ruling class. No indication of what the religious life of the commoners might have been is ever found. In the final analysis the study of the ancient Near Eastern religion comes down to a listing of divine names, with occasional glimpses as to what a given deity must have meant in concrete terms to an individual. Associations of gods of various origins are frequent in the epigraphic texts, but these were probably the result of political confederacies in which different tribes or groups would invoke their respective gods in order to warrant their mutual commitments. In this respect (1) the stela of Zakkur and (2) the treaties concluded by Matiel, an Aramean king of Arpad, deserve special attention.

1. Zakkur was king of Hamath and Luath in the region of modern-day Hama. Hostilities in this northern part of Syria reached a dramatic point at the beginning of the eighth century. The inscription informs us that Zakkur, a usurper, erected the stela for Ilwer, his god, and to express appreciation for Beelshamen's help in delivering him from his many Aramean enemies. The inscription states that Zakkur lifted his hands to the god Beelshamen, and "Beelshamen spoke to me through seers and messengers, and Beelshamen said to me: Fear not, because it was I who made you king" (Gibson, 1975, pp. 8–9). If this was so, it is not clear why the stela was erected to Ilwer and not to Beelshamen. The two gods are mentioned a second time together, along with Shamash and Sahar, on the right face of the stela. *Ilwer* is the Aramaic spelling of the ancient Mesopotamian name *Ilmer*, a storm god who came to be assimilated into Hadad. *Beelshamen* (in Phoenician, *Baal-shamim*), on the other hand, is an epithet, meaning "lord of the heavens," that was used in the ancient Near Eastern inscriptions to name the supreme god of any local pantheon. Prior to Greco-Roman times, however, Hadad and Beelshamen/Baalshamim were worshiped by different ethnic groups: Hadad by the Arameans in the Syrian hinterland, and Baalshamim by the Phoenicians on the Mediterranean coast. In Zakkur's inscription, the association of the Phoenician god of heavens to Ilwer/Hadad could have been intended as a political

move in order to gain to Zakkur's side the alliance of some western people.

2. Treaties concluded by Aramean rulers indirectly point to the active role that the gods played in daily life, since the gods are always invoked to witness the treaties, and their divine curses are called on should there be any violation of the clauses. Matiel, the Aramean king of Beit Gusi (of which Arpad, some nineteen miles north of Aleppo, was the capital), concluded a treaty with Ashurnirari V (754–745 BCE). To ensure it against possible violations, the Assyrian king summoned the gods to curse Matiel "should he sin against the treaty." Sin and Hadad were called on in a particular manner:

> May the great Lord Sin who dwells in Harran, clothe Mati'ilu, his sons, his officials, and the people of his land in leprosy as in a cloak so that they have to roam the open country, and may he have no mercy on them. . . . May Hadad put an end to Mati'ilu, his land and the people of his land through hunger, want, and famine, so that they eat the flesh of their sons and daughters and it taste as good to them as the flesh of spring lambs. May they be deprived of Adad's thunder so that rain be denied to them. Let dust be their food, pitch their ointment, donkey's urine their drink, rushes their clothing, let their sleeping place be in the corners [of walls].   (Reiner, in Pritchard, 1969, p. 533)

Late Aramean Religion. Exposed to Assyro-Babylonian influences and in continuous contact with the Canaanite traditions, the Arameans amalgamated cults and beliefs that were not distinctly their own. The disparateness of the Aramean religion is best observed in the fifth-century-BCE texts from Egypt (Memphis, Elephantine, and Aswān), where, beside Jewish and Aramean mercenaries, an Aramaic-speaking populace of deportees, refugees, and merchants settled with their families during the Persian period. This motley community worshiped a host of deities among whom the inscriptions single out the god Nabu and the goddess Banit from Babylon, and the Aramean deities Bethel, Anat-Bethel, and Malkat-Shemen ("queen of heaven"). The god Bethel appears in the names of two other no less popular deities, Eshembethel ("name of Bethel") and Herembethel ("sanctuary of Bethel"; the element *herem* is related to the Arabic *ḥaram*, "sacred precinct," the temple thus being deified and made a new hypostasis of Bethel).

In the eclectic society of Egypt under the Persians, when Greeks, Cilicians, Phoenicians, Jews, and Syrians lived together, the religious syncretism cherished by the Asiatics is most manifest in those documents that record oaths sworn by Jews in the name of Egyptian and Aramean gods (in addition to the oaths taken by Yahveh) and in the Aramean personal names that reveal the worship of Bel, Shamash, Nergal, and Atar along with

the Egyptian deities. Yet nothing is known about the religion of the Arameans living in Egypt. The historian must wait until Greco-Roman times to benefit from the overall picture that Semitic and Greek inscriptions provide for the study of the Syrian religion. In general, religion in the Near East was not subject to the challenge of speculative and critical thought that influenced the daily life in Greece at this time, for the inscriptions do not reflect the impact of new fashions.

Under the Seleucid occupation, in the fourth century BCE, the Syro-Phoenician religion seems more coherent, and the cult of the supreme god, whatever its name (Baal, Bel, Hadad, Beelshamen), appears to have been unified, probably after the cult of Zeus was brought in by the new monarchs. From Kafr Yassif, near Ptolemaïs (modern-day Acre), comes a limestone tablet of the second century BCE bearing a Greek inscription that reads as follows: "To Hadad and Atargatis, the gods who listen to prayer. Diodotus the son of Neoptolemos, on behalf of himself and Philista, his wife, and the children, has dedicated the altar in fulfillment of a vow." At this time Hadad concealed his identity under different names: at Heliopolis (modern-day Baalbek) he became Jupiter Heliopolitanus; at Dura-Europos, Zeus Kurios. At eṭ-Ṭayyibe, near Palmyra, the title *Zeus megistos keraunios*, applied to Beelshamen in a Greco-Palmyrene inscription of 134 CE, reveals one of the best-known epithets of Hadad, "the thunderer," a traditional description of the god's mastery over rain and vegetation. This is expressed differently in the Hauran by the title *Zeus epikarpios*, "the bringer of fruits," to be found on a Greek altar from Bostra.

The acceptance of a god of the heavens led the Syro-Phoenician clergy to couch the belief in this god's supremacy in a new theological notion, that of *caelus aeternus* ("eternal heavens"). The cosmic deity was supposed to preside over the course of the stars and, accordingly, was represented in the iconography as escorted by two acolytes, the sun and the moon. Palmyra offers a good example of this theological development. In 32 CE, at the same time as a cult was inaugurated at the temple of Bel, who was the national god of that city and the surrounding country, Palmyrene inscriptions present Beelshamen as "lord of the world." The lack of archaeological and epigraphic evidence does not permit a full understanding of these two important cults at Palmyra. It is tempting to stress, however, the importance that liturgical processions like the one held at Babylon on the occasion of the New Year might have had for the unification of the two cults. The presence of the temples of Bel and Beelshamen ought to be taken as a sign that these two cults were the result of the coexistence of two originally independent ethnic groups in the city (Teixidor, 1977, pp. 113–114, 136–137).

The commercial activity of Palmyra, lying on one of the main routes of the caravan trade, offered a propitious atmosphere for syncretistic cultic forms. At the same time Palmyra's social structures, organized in a tribal manner, imposed patterns on the entire religious life of the city. The importance of the god Yarhibol is illustrative of the role played by his worshipers, who settled in the neighborhood of the spring of Efca about the beginning of the second millennium BCE. Yarhibol's authority, exercised by means of oracles, transcended the territory of Efca: the god bore witness for some individuals, attested oaths, and allotted lands to temples and individuals. His civic responsibilities were never diminished throughout the entire history of Palmyra (Teixidor, 1979, pp. 29–32). Another tribal group worshiped Aglibol as a moon god, and Malakbel ("angel of Bel") as the sun god. To the Palmyrenes living in Rome, Malakbel was Sol Sanctissimus ("most sacred sun"). At Rome the cult of the sun reached its climax under the Syrian emperor Elagabalus (Heliogabalus). The heliolatry propagated by him succeeded in merging the cult of the emperors with that of Sol Invictus ("invincible sun"), and in 274 CE, under Aurelian, the cult of the sun became a state religion. These religious fashions came into the western Mediterranean from Syria and were transformed by the Roman philosophers; thus the sun became the ever-present image of the intelligible God (Teixidor, 1977, pp. 48–51).

Female deities were prominent in the Aramean pantheons, but their role in the religious life is not always clear, for their personal features are often blurred in the iconography. Atargatis was the Aramean goddess *par excellence*. Nowhere did her cult excel more than at Hierapolis (modern-day Membidj). According to Lucian (*De dea Syria* 33.47–49), statues of Hadad and Atargatis were carried in procession to the sea twice a year. People then came to the holy city from the whole of Syria and Arabia, and even from beyond the Euphrates. In a relief from Dura-Europos, Atargatis and her consort are seated side by side, but Atargatis, flanked by her lions, is larger than Hadad. Hadad's attribute, the bull, is represented in a considerable smaller scale than are the lions. As was the case at Hierapolis, the supremacy of the weather god was overshadowed by the popularity of his female partner. A major representation of the goddess can be seen today at Palmyra on a colossal limestone beam in the temple of Bel. On it Bel is shown in his chariot charging a monster. The combat is witnessed by six deities, one of whom is Atargatis. She is identified by the fish at her feet, an artistic tradition

linked to Ascalon, where Atargatis was portrayed as a mermaid (Teixidor, 1979, pp. 73, 74, 76).

During Greco-Roman times the Arab goddess Allat assumed some of the features of other female deities: in Palmyrene iconography she appears both as a Greek Athena and as the Syrian Atargatis. Her sanctuary at Palmyra, excavated in the 1970s, is located in the neighborhood of the temple of Beelshamen, and this fact lends a special character to the city's western quarter, in which Arab tribes settled during the second century BCE. A Greek inscription recently found in this area equates Allat with Artemis (Teixidor, 1979, pp. 53–62). This multiform presence of Allat underlines the formidable impact of the Arab tribes on the Aramaic-speaking peoples of the Near East. Aramean traditions persisted, however. The region of Edessa (modern-day Urfa), called Osrhoene by the Greeks, was ruled by a dynasty of Arab origin from about 132 BCE, but it remained open to cultural influences from Palmyra, Jerusalem, and Adiabene. Notwithstanding the presence of Macedonian colonists and several centuries of commercial activity with the West and the Far East, traditional cults survived. At the beginning of the modern era, Sumatar Harabesi, about twenty-five miles northeast of Harran, became a religious center primarily devoted to the cult of Sin (Drijvers, 1980, pp. 122–128).

Presence of the Supernatural. The inspection of the entrails of sacrificial animals for divinatory purposes was much in favor in Mesopotamia, as is emphasized by its omen collections, and this technique of communication with the supernatural forces was certainly spread over Syria and Palestine (Oppenheim, 1977, pp. 213–217; cf. *2 Kgs.* 16:15). On the other hand, message dreams and oracles must have become an essential feature of Aramean religious life, for in the meager body of Aramaic inscriptions we read about Panamu erecting a statue to Hadad at the god's request and about Zakkur being comforted by Beelshamen through seers and messengers. During Greco-Roman times, occasional texts written in the Aramaic dialects of Palmyra, Hatra (near Mossul), and Sumatar Harabesi (at nearby Urfa, in Turkey) refer too to temples and statues erected by individuals upon the deities' request.

Afterlife. Although the Aramaic texts of all periods mention the names of various deities and occasionally convey the prayers that individuals addressed to them, the epigraphic material rarely supplies any evidence of a belief in an afterlife. Funerary texts do stress the inviolability of the tomb, but this is a universal human concern: the fine epitaph of one of the priests of Nerab in the early seventh century BCE is a good example of this concern:

Si'-gabbari, priest of Sahar in Nerab. This is his image. Because of my righteousness before him he gave me a good name and prolonged my days. In the day I died my mouth was not bereft of words, and with my eyes I gazed upon the children of the fourth generation: they wept for me and were deeply distraught. They did not lay with me any vessel of silver or bronze: with my shroud they laid me, lest my sarcophagus be plundered in the future. Whoever you are who do wrong and rob me, may Sahar and Nikkal and Nushk cause him to die a miserable death and may his posterity perish!   (Teixidor, 1979, pp. 45–46)

The royal inscription of Panamu I of Yady that is carved on the statue of Hadad asks the son who should grasp the scepter and sit on Panamu's throne to do sacrifice to Hadad. It says: "May the soul of Panamu eat with thee, and may the soul of Panamu drink with thee." But this text is not characteristic. The Cilician region of which Panamu was king was never a land of Semites, and consequently the Aramaic inscription may express convictions that are not Semitic. Neither the Aramaic texts from Egypt nor the Palmyrene inscriptions disclose their authors' views on death and afterlife. This silence is especially striking at Palmyra, where hundreds of funerary inscriptions give the name of the deceased in a terse, almost stereotyped manner, and the historian is inclined to conclude that the Palmyrenes did not have any concern whatever for the afterlife.

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ĀRAṆYAKAS. *See* Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND RELIGION. Even in contemporary circumstances, with living informants and known histories, the analysis of religion presents formidable obstacles to the scholar. It follows that the exploration of prehistoric religious ideas and institutions is even more difficult. The archaeologist must cope with the partial evidence, mute artifacts, and immature methodologies that are available. Given these barriers, it is not surprising that over the past century archaeology and the study of religion have maintained a close but uneasy relationship. Yet both of these broad intellectual endeavors have evolved slowly into more systematic disciplines, and their relationship has matured into a mutually supportive one.

Historical Perspective. Archaeology, the study of past cultures from their material remains, is a mongrel discipline, and only a few of its many heritages are respectable. The beginnings of archaeology included looting for the collection of antiquities, searches for lost biblical tribes, and excavations to verify claims of national, racial, or ethnic superiority. The evolution of archaeology as a scholarly field took distinctly different paths in different world regions, and its relationship with the study of religion varied accordingly.

Protohistoric archaeology. In the Near East and the Mediterranean, the nineteenth-century decipherment of the Egyptian hieroglyphs, Mesopotamian cuneiform, and other ancient scripts began the legitimate tradition of Old World archaeology. Classical and biblical archaeology, Egyptology, and much of Mesopotamian archaeology generally have been very concerned with the discovery of new texts, the verification and refinement of the information presented in the existing historical corpus, and the extension of our understanding of the historical periods into the immediately preceding prehistoric epochs. This aspect of archaeology—as a supplement to textual scholarship—was, and remains, an important element in the study of religion. It is certainly the most important aspect of archaeology for exploring the origins of the major Old World religious traditions. Excavations have given us many of the tablets, scrolls, and inscriptions that form the corpus of textual materials on the origins and nature of the religions of the ancient Near East. This contribution of archaeology to the study of religion continues, as demonstrated by the impact on biblical studies of recent discoveries of early texts during such excavations as those at Ugarit and Ebla in Syria.

However, excavations at other sites—Jericho in Palestine, Ur and Uruk in Mesopotamia, and Nimrud and Nineveh in Assyria—have also supplied us with the material remains of these ancient cultures and the broader context of early cult and ritual. Such excavations have provided a direct view of the material culture of religious life—temples, shrines, images, and artifacts. The earlier levels at these sites have also revealed the evolution of religion leading into the historical periods. Structure foundations, early tombs, the strata of tells, and their associated artifacts allow us to trace the prehistoric development of rituals and cults, mortuary practices, and multifunctional temple complexes in ancient Palestine, Egypt, and Sumer.

Pre-Columbian archaeology. In the New World, archaeology and the study of religion also started from a historical base. The Spanish conquest and colonization of Mexico and Peru left a legacy of historical description by the conquistadors, inquisitors, and bureaucrats who administered the conquered empires, kingdoms, and tribes of the American Indians. The descriptions from contact and colonial periods throughout the Americas were rich in their coverage of pre-Columbian religion, since it was of particular concern to the missionaries and bureaucrats who were the primary historians and ethnographers of American cultures. In addition to these European texts, a number of native bark and deerskin folding books (codices) survived the colonial era and provided an indigenous perspective on the pre-Columbian culture. Scholars of this combined historical and ethnographic corpus, ethnohistorians such as Eduard Seler, began the tradition of studies of pre-Columbian religion.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the gradual and continuing decipherment of the hieroglyphs of the Maya civilization of Mexico and Central America led such scholars as Sylvanus G. Morley back into the

archaeological exploration of the gods and rites of earlier periods. In the first half of the twentieth century archaeological excavations worked back from the rich ethnohistorical record to uncover the art, iconography, and glyphic texts of earlier pre-Columbian religions. Interpretations relied heavily on later ethnographical and historical records, a methodology referred to as the "direct-historical approach" to archaeology. The earlier form and context of Indian religion was elucidated by extensive excavations at the great prehistoric urban and ceremonial centers of the New World: ancient Maya centers such as Copán in Honduras and Chichén Itzá in the Yucatán, as well as imperial capitals like that of the Aztec at Tenochtitlán (now Mexico City) and the Inca capital at Cuzco, Peru.

As pre-Columbian research progressed, it enriched the cross-cultural study of religion. The limits of previous concepts of religious behavior were stretched by consideration of the nature and scale of Aztec human sacrifice, Inca ancestor worship, and Maya fascination with astronomical lore and calendric ritual. Explorations of all these phenomena involved a combination of colonial history, epigraphic research, and direct-historical field archaeology.

Prehistoric archaeology. Because of the combination of historical and archaeological approaches, the high civilizations of the Near East, the Mediterranean, Mesoamerica, and Peru initially provided the most information of the greatest reliability for studies of cross-cultural variation in religious behavior and of the history of religious traditions. Yet it was the archaeology of less politically complex societies in North America and Europe that led to most of the methodological and theoretical insights of this century. These breakthroughs eventually allowed the discipline to transcend its dependence on textual evidence and the direct-historical approach. Perhaps it was the weakness of the historical record for these areas that led to more innovative approaches. Alternatively, it may have been that the less complex structure of many of these societies—egalitarian bands, tribes, and chiefdoms—made them more amenable to cross-cultural analogy and comparison, since most ethnographically studied societies were at these levels.

Whatever the impetus may have been, the use of ethnographic analogy and anthropological comparison was widespread in interpretations of the archaeological record in North America. By the 1940s and 1950s Walter Taylor, Julian H. Steward, and others were advocating an even closer association between anthropology and archaeology and their use in interpreting the artifactual remains of ancient societies. Steward emphasized that cultures were not just collections of traits but integrated systems adapted to their environments. He stressed that human culture, like any other system, was patterned and that these patterns were reflected in the nature and location of sites and in the distribution and types of ancient artifacts.

The ideas of Steward and "culture ecologists" like him led to new approaches to the archaeological reconstruction of ancient cultures. In the 1950s, in Peru, Gordon Willey first applied the method known as "settlement-pattern studies," that is, the analysis of site distribution and variation, to reconstruct the nature and evolution of prehistoric societies. In Europe, Graham Clarke used culture ecology to identify ancient subsistence and economic systems accurately. These new approaches to interpretation were further strengthened by technical breakthroughs such as the radiocarbon and tree-ring dating methods, and by improved field techniques, which could now recover such trace remains as preserved human feces (coprolites) and microscopic fossil pollen.

Religion, unfortunately, was initially ignored by these progressive developments in archaeology. The growing theoretical and methodological sophistication of archaeology had its roots firmly in culture ecology and other materialist approaches. Some influential thinkers, such as Leslie White, explicitly argued that religion was of no importance in cultural evolution, that it was "epiphenomenal." Others, like Steward, felt that while religion was essential to the core of cultural behavior, it was, unfortunately, inscrutable to archaeological analysis. While many archaeologists believed that all aspects of culture left patterns in the archaeological record, they also felt that the patterning in religious behavior was too complex, idiosyncratic, or obscure to be accurately perceived. Thus, throughout the period of transformation in archaeology in the 1940s and 1950s, the archaeology of religion progressed systematically only in those regions and periods that could be related to historically known religions. Analysis of fully prehistoric ideology was left to those who were willing to apply unsystematic and subjective interpretations, often drawn from popular psychology, to ancient architecture, artifacts, or art.

The "New Archaeology." It took a second revolution in archaeological interpretation, beginning in the 1960s, to bring modern archaeology and the study of religion together as collaborative disciplines. Lewis R. Binford in the Americas and David Clarke in Britain were among the archaeologists who began to argue that the capabilities of archaeology could be broadened through the use of analogy to ethnographic societies and, above all, through computer-assisted statistical approaches. In a series of controversial papers and texts, these self-

designated New Archaeologists decried the compla-
cency of conventional archaeological methodology, es-
pecially its reluctance to explore the nature of ancient
societies beyond questions of chronology and subsist-
ence. Binford argued that hypotheses concerning the
nature of ancient social or even religious systems could
be drawn from ethnographic comparisons and could
then be verified or discredited by vigorous statistical ex-
amination of the patterning in the archaeological re-
mains. These new approaches and greater ambitions for
archaeology were tested, generally verified, and refined
by studies of the Indians of the southwestern United
States and ethnoarchaeological studies of the Inuit (Es-
kimo) of the Arctic, the !Kung San of southern Africa,
and the Aborigines of Australia.

While there was never an explicit, universal accep-
tance of the new approaches, they were gradually, per-
haps unconsciously, absorbed into many branches of ar-
chaeology, including research on prehistoric religion.
Numerous studies of fully prehistoric ideological sys-
tems began in this period. Gerald Hawkins and Alexan-
der Thom began computer-assisted studies of the pat-
terning and astronomical alignments of Stonehenge and
other megalithic constructions of Bronze Age and Neo-
lithic Europe (c. 4000–1800 BCE). These researches gave
rise to the subdiscipline of archaeoastronomy, research
on the ancients' concern with astronomy and astrology,
and this concern's reflection in architecture and settle-
ment patterns. Studies of the patterning and placement
of markings, images, and art of the Stone Age were be-
gun by scholars such as Alexander Marshack, André
Leroi-Gourhan, and Peter J. Ucko. All of these studies
drew upon statistical assessment and analogy to ethno-
graphically known peoples in order to elucidate the
structure of Stone Age religion.

Such researches demonstrated that early prehistoric
religion was amenable to archaeological interpretation.
Current research has continued and expanded the scru-
tiny of archaeological patterns for material reflections
of ancient religious behavior. Studies by John Fritz,
Joyce Marcus, and Evon Z. Vogt, to name a few, have
examined the structure of ideological conceptions as re-
flected in architecture and site placement in the Anasazi
culture of New Mexico (c. 600–1300 CE) and the ancient
Maya civilization of Guatemala (c. 300–900 CE). Central-
place theory and other forms of locational analysis have
been used to study site placement in regional land-
scapes, in order to deduce how worldviews might have
affected the selection and relative importance of cere-
monial centers and shrines.

Religion and evolutionary theory. The ambitions of
contemporary archaeological methodology to decipher

ancient belief systems, though still struggling, have led
to a renewed interest in the role of religion in the evo-
lution of human culture. For the first half of this cen-
tury, economic, Marxist, and ecological theory domi-
nated studies of the prehistoric development of
civilizations. In retrospect it is now clear that this ma-
terialist bias was inevitable, given the methodological
limitations of archaeology. With the conviction that
prehistoric religious systems were beyond scientific
analysis, theoretical assessment of cultural change and
development had naturally turned to other factors.
However, the new methodological concerns resulted in
a resurgence of interest in the role of ideology in prehis-
toric change. In the 1970s archaeologists from diverse
theoretical backgrounds began to call for a new look at
religion's impact on the rise and fall of civilizations. Ar-
chaeologists have responded in recent publications, dis-
cussing the general evolutionary role of ancient religion
as well as the specific effects of ideology on the forma-
tion and reinforcement of early state polities.

This revived interest in the role of religion in the evo-
lution of culture has led to new theoretical perspectives
even in the archaeology of the great protohistoric civi-
lizations. Most archaeologists of late prehistoric Meso-
potamia, for example, no longer turn exclusively to the
effects of irrigation or demographic pressure for the
causes of state formation. For decades, historical and
anthropological scholars, including Mircea Eliade and
Paul Wheatley, have argued that the ceremonial center
was the nucleus of the early city. Anthropological ar-
chaeologists have turned again to such perspectives in
their examination of earlier prehistoric developments.
[See Cities.]

For example, a series of researches have examined
patterns of pottery distribution of the northern Meso-
potamian Halaf and Samarran cultures (c. 5500–4500
BCE). The identified patterns of intersite similarity and
difference in design-element distributions have been
seen to reflect the territories of early chiefdoms. The
distinctive styles of the chiefdoms are also seen as in-
dications of the integration and communication pro-
vided by early ceremonial centers and their religious
rituals. In these interpretations the early ceremonial
center is related archaeologically to a presumed func-
tion of reinforcement of collective identity, a role seen
as critical in the evolution of later, more complex soci-
eties. Thus, the theoretical perspectives of thinkers such
as Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, and Eliade, too long
alien to archaeology, have been returned to field re-
search and interpretation. In the process religious be-
havior has been incorporated into anthropological as-
sessments of prehistoric cultural evolution.

In discussing the later period of the formation of humankind's first civilization, ancient Sumer, archaeologists continue to emphasize the importance of irrigation, demographics, trade, and warfare in the genesis of urban society. However, they also incorporate ideology into the evolutionary equation—and not merely as a Marxist, after-the-fact legitimation of political authority. For example, Robert M. Adams, in *Heartland of Cities* (1981), takes a holistic perspective on the origins of the state in Mesopotamia. He sees early city-states and their protourban antecedents as centers of security in all senses: subsistence security because of their role in irrigation, storage of surplus, and trade; defensive security provided by a large nucleated population; and spiritual security and identity in the form of the temple. The ceremonial centers of Ubaid times (4500–3500 BCE) evolved into the urban centers of Uruk times (3500–3100 BCE) because they became central places servicing the full range of economic, social, and spiritual needs. The temple-dominated economies of such centers were also preadapted to legitimate the state political authority that emerged in later periods.

Similarly, perspectives on cultural evolution in the New World have begun to reincorporate religion into interpretations of the rise and fall of civilizations. Kent V. Flannery and Robert Drennan have argued that religion and ritual were vital to the formation of early complex pre-Columbian societies such as the Olmec civilization of Mexico. Geoffrey W. Conrad and I have presented reinterpretations of the importance and nature of such religious phenomena as the Inca worship of royal mummies and the Aztec central cult of mass human sacrifice. These new perspectives argue that such cults helped to drive the explosive expansion of both the Inca empire of Peru (1438–1532 CE) and the Aztec hegemony in Mexico (1428–1519 CE). Indeed, they contend that due to religious and political institutionalization the cults became irreversible forces that destabilized these pre-Columbian empires and predisposed them to swift disintegration.

So, in both the Old World and the Americas archaeologists have rediscovered the study of religion. Appropriate methodologies for the study of prehistoric religion have been suggested and continue to be explored. Meanwhile, theoretical models for prehistoric cultural evolution have reincorporated the study of religion into considerations of social change. In turn, these researches and interpretations in archaeology have broadened the temporal and geographic range of information available to scholars of comparative religion. The future holds even more promise as methodologies improve, theory becomes more sophisticated, and

the symbiotic relationship of these two disciplines grows.

Recent Contributions. The historical development of the relationship between archaeology and religion involved a sequence of important projects, discoveries, and theoretical breakthroughs. However, there also have been many contributions by archaeology to the study of religion in particular regions and periods. Here it is only possible to cite a few of the noteworthy finds.

Paleolithic religion. The archaeology of religion in the Paleolithic period, the Old Stone Age, is one area in which new methodologies and concerns have led to surprising discoveries. It is now possible to say with certainty that *homo religiosus* predates *Homo sapiens* by a considerable period.

Our ancestor of a million to a hundred thousand years ago, *Homo erectus*, had an average cranial capacity of about two-thirds that of modern humans. Yet *Homo erectus* left traces of possible religious or ritual behavior. This evidence includes finds of ocher earth pigments (perhaps for body painting) at Terra Amata in France and the discovery of *Homo erectus* skull remains at the Cho-k'ou-tien cave in China that may indicate ritual cannibalism. These data can be contested, being based only on analogy to ethnographically known belief systems. There can be no question, however, about the rich spiritual life of Neanderthal man, *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*. Beginning about one hundred thousand years ago, this robust early form of *Homo sapiens* devoted considerable energy to the burial of the dead, as shown by excavation of Neanderthal cemeteries in France, Germany, and the Near East. Ritual treatments include the use of red ocher, sometimes grave goods, and, in at least one instance, offerings of flowers.

In the Upper Paleolithic period, beginning about thirty-five thousand years ago, anatomically modern *Homo sapiens* appeared, and made a quantum leap in art and religious imagery. New statistical approaches to patterning in the archaeological record have been applied to generate specific hypotheses on the spectacular cave paintings, portable art, and complex, enigmatic markings characteristic of the late epoch of the Stone Age. Ucko, Andrée Rosenfeld, and other anthropologists have turned to the ethnography of contemporary hunting and gathering societies for analogies. Their interpretations emphasize hunting magic, totemism, and shamanism. Leroi-Gourhan uses statistical assessment of patterning in the forms and distributions of specific images in the caves. He has produced a structural, almost linguistic, analysis of message and meaning in Paleolithic art. Marshack also turns to statistical assessment in his work on the markings and iconographs of the Pa-

leolithic. However, he concludes that the complex symbolic system was concerned with lunar cycles and other calendric patterns, as well as with fertility and sympathetic magic. Taken together, recent archaeological studies constitute a considerable corpus on the fully prehistoric belief systems of early humankind.

The early Near East. In the Near East, the heartland of many of the world's major religions, the contribution of archaeology to the study of the origins of these traditions extends back to the seventh and eighth millennia BCE. Excavations by Kathleen M. Kenyon in preceramic Jericho and finds at related sites (e.g., Beidha, Ain Ghazal, Tell Ramad) have revealed burial practices and iconography emphasizing skull worship. James Mellaart's excavations in seventh-millennium levels at Çatal Hüyük, Anatolia, have uncovered elaborate religious imagery in shrines with plaster sculptures and artwork incorporating the skulls of bulls. Continuity of some iconographic elements, including bullhead designs, suggests that these earliest Neolithic religions may have influenced the later cults of the northern Mesopotamian Halaf and Samarran chiefdoms. In turn, excavations at ceremonial centers of these chiefdoms, such as Tell es-Sawwan, indicate that they greatly influenced the temple complexes of the Ubaid culture, the first phase of the Sumerian civilization in southern Mesopotamia. Thus, recent evidence suggests a continuous evolution of religious systems leading to the historical Near Eastern religions.

Archaeological research over the past fifty years has unearthed a wealth of data on the religion of the later high civilization of Mesopotamia, and at early Sumerian centers such as Eridu, Uruk, Ur, and Tepe Gawra. This evidence has permitted detailed characterization and dating of the development of Sumerian temple architecture, art, and iconography, as well as the changing cultural context of religion and ritual. Concerning later, historical periods (after 3000 BCE), the excavations at Ur in the 1930s and 1940s by C. Leonard Woolley provided a clear glimpse of Sumerian elite life and state religion in that city-state's temple complexes and royal cemetery. Twentieth-century excavations sponsored by British, French, German, and American institutions at Ur, Uruk, Mari, Babylon, Nineveh, and other Mesopotamian sites have also recovered thousands of tablets. From the recovered texts and inscriptions, the epigraphers Samuel Noah Kramer and Thorkild Jacobsen have reconstructed the nature of theology, ritual, and myth in ancient Sumer, Akkad, and Babylon. Meanwhile, the excavations and tablets of Nuzi, Susa, Mari, and other sites have provided evidence on the identity and cults of the surrounding, previously shadowy, his-

torical peoples—the Hurrians, the Elamites, and the kingdom of Mari.

Perhaps the most important and unexpected discovery of recent years came from excavations by an Italian team at Tell Mardikh, in Syria. In 1975 they found a royal archive of over fifteen thousand tablets, detailing the history and culture of the third-millennium kingdom of Ebla. The ongoing decipherment of the Ebla tablets is revolutionizing our understanding of early Near Eastern history and religion. These texts have provided a new perspective on the ancient Near East and promise to give us a closer view of the origins of the religious systems of later times.

Biblical archaeology. One beneficiary of these discoveries of early kingdoms in adjacent regions has been biblical archaeology. At Ras Shamra in Syria, Claude F.-A. Schaeffer has directed continuous excavations since 1929, uncovering the ancient city of Ugarit and thousands of Ugaritic tablets. These texts have had a profound impact on biblical studies, since they detail the nature of second-millennium Canaanite religion and society. Meanwhile, progress in biblical archaeology in Palestine itself has been substantial and steady. Literally hundreds of sites relating to the Old Testament period have been excavated in the past half-century, including such important sites as Jericho, Jerusalem, Megiddo, Tel Dan, Gezer, Shechem (modern-day Nablus), Lachish, and Samaria.

One should not overlook the contributions of archaeology to the historical study of religions of later times in the Near East. Archaeology has provided a richer context of material evidence to check, refine, and extend the historical record on religion in ancient Egypt, early Islam, and early Christianity. Furthermore, many of the actual historical and religious texts have been recovered by systematic archaeological excavations, including most of the Dead Sea Scrolls and numerous papyrus texts in Egypt. The recent excavations and discoveries at Nag Hammadi in Egypt illustrate the close interplay between religious textual studies and archaeology. Archaeologists returned there in the 1970s to excavate areas in a zone where gnostic texts had been fortuitously discovered decades earlier. These ongoing excavations are establishing the material context of these important documents.

China and India. In the study of the religious systems of Asia, archaeology has been traditionally limited to a supplementary role. Excavations have recovered texts and inscriptions and have confirmed or refined the interpretations of historical scholarship. The bronzes, oracle bones, bamboo tablets, and other inscriptions so critical to the study of early Chinese religion have been

recovered in large numbers by the systematic, albeit largely atheoretical, archaeology of modern China. Excavations at the Shang tombs at An-yang (c. 1400 BCE) and the mortuary complex of the first emperor (200 BCE) have revealed the spectacular nature of early Chinese religion and its critical role in polity and power. Indeed, new theoretical perspectives by historical scholars, such as David Keightley, have argued that the genesis of China's first states and the form of its early theology are inseparable.

Modern anthropological archaeology has only just begun in China. Yet already more methodologically rigorous approaches to prehistoric and protohistoric periods are beginning to challenge traditional interpretations. In a series of works K. C. Chang has compared texts with archaeological evidence and datings to show that the early Hsia, Shang, and Chou dynasties may have been largely contemporaneous polities rather than a linear sequence of dynasties. Such broad reconsiderations of chronology and history will require parallel rethinking of the history of early state religion in China. Recent archaeological contributions to the study of early Chinese religion also include evidence on belief systems in the Neolithic Yang-shao (4000–2500 BCE) and Lung-shan (2500–1800 BCE) periods. Ho Ping-ti and other Chinese archaeologists have argued that iconography, settlement layouts, and even domestic architecture in these village societies reflect uniquely regional views on cosmology, ancestor worship, and fertility. While largely based on analogy to later religions, such interpretations show the potential of future archaeological research.

The archaeology of the Indus Valley civilization (2400–1800 BCE) of Pakistan and India is another field in which evidence and analogy can be used to project intriguing, but still uncertain, connections with historical religions. In this case, the architecture, art, and iconography of Mohenjo-Daro, Harappa, Lothal, and other cities of the Indus Valley civilization have been carefully compared to the Vedic texts on early Hindu ritual and belief. General conceptual parallels have been inferred from the archaeological evidence, such as concerns with bathing and the ritual use of water, or the probable existence of a rigid, castelike social organization. Archaeologists and Vedic scholars have also noted many quite specific shared traits between Indus Valley artifacts, glyphs, or iconography and historical descriptions of Aryan culture in the Vedas, for example, the form of incense burners, the lotus sitting position, and possible prototypes of specific deities. Such interpretations are complicated by growing evidence that the Indus Valley civilization was created by a racially

and linguistically Dravidian, rather than Aryan, people. Nonetheless, the archaeology of the region does seem to point to Indus Valley culture for the origins of many aspects of the Hindu tradition.

The Mediterranean and Europe. Archaeological research in Greece and Egypt has always been dominated by textual and historical studies. As in biblical studies the archaeologist has provided texts and inscriptions as well as evidence on the broader material context of early religion. This contribution of assistance to epigraphic research often has been of great significance. For example, the excavations of the sacred capital at Amarna, in Egypt, have uncovered iconography, architecture, and texts that vastly expand our views on the religion of Egypt and adjacent cultures in the fourteenth century BCE.

Archaeological research has also pushed back the chronological limits of our knowledge of religion in ancient Egypt and Greece. In Egypt our understanding of the antiquity and evolution of religion has been extended by the excavation of Neolithic cemeteries and of late predynastic mastaba tombs, the mud-brick antecedents of the pyramids. In the Aegean and Balkans, recent excavations have established a chronological and cultural context for the study of religion, including ample evidence concerning Mycenaean and Minoan religion and even earlier (third and fourth millennia BCE) shrines, funerary practices, and religious icons. Marija Gimbutas and other archaeologists have carried interpretations on religion back to the earliest Neolithic developments in eastern Europe in the seventh millenium BCE. Gimbutas has synthesized the evidence from excavations of shrines, burials, and figurine iconography to reconstruct the general form, specific deities, and development of the indigenous cults of Old Europe. While still highly speculative in nature, such contributions demonstrate the growing potential of archaeology for the study of fully prehistoric religious systems. [*See* Prehistoric Religions, *article on* Old Europe.]

The prehistoric archaeology of western Europe has been transformed in recent years by new approaches, including the studies already mentioned on Paleolithic religion and on astronomical patterning in Neolithic and Bronze Age megalithic shrines. Of even greater significance has been a revolution in chronology and evolutionary interpretation led by Colin Renfrew and other British archaeologists. In the 1960s the correction of errors in the radiocarbon dating method produced new chronological alignments for all of European prehistory, redating the beginning of megaliths in northern Europe to before 3500 BCE. It is now clear that these and other spectacular manifestations of early European re-

ligion can no longer be defined historically or interpreted iconographically in terms of influences or parallels with the Aegean world. As a result, the study of religion and cultural development in prehistoric Europe has turned to the new approaches and ethnographic perspectives popular in American archaeology. European and American prehistoric studies have entered an exciting period of cross-fertilization in anthropological concepts and archaeological methods.

The Americas. In the New World the methodological and theoretical assessments of the past two decades have enriched the traditional ethnohistorical and direct-historical approaches to the study of pre-Columbian religion. Prehistoric cultures from diverse regions, such as the Mississippian peoples of the southeastern United States (c. 1000–1500 CE), the Pueblo cultures of the Southwest (300–1300 CE), and the Moche civilization of Peru (200 BCE–600 CE), have been studied by systematic statistical analysis of patterning in their archaeological remains. In the search for patterns, settlement distribution, grave goods, architectural alignments, distribution of design elements on potsherds, and many other potential reflections of ancient social groups, political divisions, and belief systems have been examined. These studies, along with broader theoretical assessments, have led to a tremendous increase in our understanding of prehistoric religion in the New World and its interrelationship with the political and social evolution of pre-Columbian tribes, chiefdoms, and states.

These new approaches also hold the prospect of resolving long-standing issues in the study of pre-Columbian religion. Since the 1950s George Kubler and other scholars have warned against the general practice of simply imposing the historically known meaning of contact-period religious artifacts and art onto the evidence from earlier periods. Kubler has pointed out that, over the centuries, shifts or even complete disjunctions in the meaning of religious symbols may have occurred. Systematic approaches to patterning in the record may provide methods of testing ethnohistorically presumed meanings through study of the distribution and association of artifacts and images.

New archaeological discoveries and new approaches to interpretation are also challenging long-standing opinions on specific aspects of pre-Columbian religious studies. For example, many scholars studying the religions of the high civilizations of Mesoamerica and Peru have begun to doubt the utility of seeking specific identities or referents for individual deities. Instead, they are analyzing art and iconography for evidence of concepts and structures in pre-Columbian belief systems. The results have shown that pre-Columbian religions were as laden with sexual symbolism, manifold godheads, and structural complexities as the religions of East Asia. Archaeological research is also discovering unexpected aspects of pre-Columbian religions—for example, the importance of ancestor worship among the ancient Classic Maya civilization of Central America (300–900 CE) and the shamanistic nature of the religion of the early Olmec culture in Mexico (1300–600 BCE).

Prospects. Beyond the small sample cited here, archaeology has contributed to the study of religion in virtually every world region and period. The archaeology of Japan, Southwest Asia, Australia, sub-Saharan Africa, Soviet Central Asia, and other zones has involved extensive excavation and interpretation of the material evidence of religious behavior. As archaeological research broadens in geographical range and further develops its methodological tools, it will become an even more important aspect of the study of religion. It will continue to extend the breadth and depth of scholars' search for variations, connections, structural similarities, and cognitive parallels in human religious systems.

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ARTHUR ANDREW DEMAREST

ARCHETYPES. The English word *archetype* derives from a Greek word that is prominent in the writings of religious thinkers during the Hellenistic period. In modern times, the term has been used to refer to fundamental structures in man's psyche as well as in his religious life. In either sense, an archetype is a pattern that determines human experience (whether on a conscious or an unconscious level) and makes itself felt as something both vital and holy.

The Meaning of Archetype. The Greek compound derives from the combined meaning of two words, *tupos* and *archē*, both of which have double referents. *Tupos* refers both to a physical blow and to the concrete manifestation of its impact. Hence, the seal and its imprint are both *tupoi*. Further, the relation between any form and its derivative forms is indicated by this term. For example, the cast that molds the statue and the statue itself are both *tupoi*, as is the mold that is placed around a fruit by a grower in order to shape it as it grows. Internal and invisible molding is also a kind of *tupos* as in biological generation: the child is the *tupos* of its parent. Finally, as in the English cognate, *type*, *tupos* comes to signify any character or nature that is shared by numerous, related phenomena with the result that they appear to have been cast from the same mold: for example, the eucalyptus is a type of tree.

The nominal prefix *archē* refers to what is first or original, both in a temporal and in an ontological sense. As such, it may indicate equally the heavenly powers that govern the cosmos, the ruler of a realm, or the vital organs that empower life in the body.

Together, these two Greek words make up *to archē-tupon*, or "the archetype," a term that was not so commonly used as either of its components but that does appear with some frequency in the rather esoteric writings of certain Hellenistic religious philosophers. Already in *De opificio mundi* (1.69), the Jewish theologian Philo Judaeus refers to the archetype as the *imago dei* ("god-image") residing in and molding man in the likeness of God.

Later, Irenaeus uses the term when, in his lengthy treatise attacking the so-called Christian heretics (*Against Heresies* 2.7.5), he recounts a Valentinian version of the cosmogony. According to the Valentinians, a group of gnostic Christians, the world was not created by God out of nothing, but rather it was the fabrication of a demiurge, who copied directly or indirectly (depending on the version) an archetypal world (the Pleroma) that existed outside himself. In this view, the Demiurge creates in the manner of a mechanic who builds a robot that simulates, but does not replicate, a living model.

A third use of *to archētupon* during the Hellenistic period is found in the writings of the Platonic mystic Plotinus. He intuited a divine realm of which the creation was a mere reflection. Plotinus reminds his reader to observe the regularity and order exhibited by the natural world. This harmonious state of affairs, he claims, depends on a higher reality for its laws of being. The phenomenological realm does not truly exist, according to Plotinus, but appears at the boundaries between true being, that is, the One, and the void external to it. Plotinus's cosmogony thus presents a third use of the imagery associated with the term *archetype*. At work here is neither Philo's idea of an inner force (inspiration) nor the Valentinian concept of the craftsman basing his creation on a model (imitation), but rather the metaphor of reflection that depicts an emptiness upon which is cast—as if upon a mirror—the form of a divine but transcendent reality.

For all three philosophers, the word *archētupon* is used to depict a cosmogonic principle. Common to all three belief systems is the conviction that the creation of the cosmos, including the creation of man, depends on the preexistence of a transcendental reality.

During the twentieth century, the word *archetype* has been rehabilitated by the historian of religions Mircea Eliade and the depth psychologist C. G. Jung. Eliade, in his study of the religions of mankind, uses the term to name the sacred paradigms that are expressed in myth and articulated in ritual. For Jung, the concept of the archetype can also be applied to the dynamic structures of the unconscious that determine individual patterns of experience and behavior.

Eliade's Understanding of the Archetypes. In his preface to the 1959 edition of *Cosmos and History*, Eliade explains that, for him, the terms *exemplary model*, *paradigm*, and *archetype* are synonymous. For the member of tribal and traditional cultures, the archetypes provide the models of his institutions and the norms of his various categories of behavior. They constitute a sacred reality that was revealed to mankind at the beginning of time. Consequently, the archetypal patterns are re-

garded as having a supernatural or transcendent origin.

The sacred and the profane. These observations provide the basis for Eliade's description of the way in which religious man distinguishes two separate modes of being in the world: the sacred and the profane. The member of a tribal or traditional society may be called *homo religiosus* ("religious man") precisely because he perceives both a transcendent model (or archetype) and a mundane reality that is capable of being molded to correspond to the transcendent model. Furthermore, he experiences the transcendent model as holy, that is, as manifesting absolute power and value. In fact, it is the sacred quality of the archetype that compels him to orient his life around it. Finally, the sacred is recognized as such because it appears to man within the profane setting of everyday events. This is the hierophany ("appearance of the sacred"), that is, when the supernatural makes itself felt in all its numinosity in contrast to the natural order.

The hierophany. The appearance of the sacred may take on any form. It may be perceptible by way of the senses: God in the form of a white buffalo or in the magnificence of a roaring waterfall. The sacred may appear to man by way of a dream, as in Jacob's dream of the angels of the Lord descending and ascending upon the ladder between heaven and earth (*Gn.* 28:12). Or the hierophany may be envisioned by way of the imagination, as, for example, the visions of Muḥammad, Black Elk, and Teresa of Ávila. The sacred reality makes itself known to the consciousness of man by whatever means are available to it. [*See* Hierophany.]

Orientation. The consequence of an encounter with the sacred, states Eliade, is the desire to remain in relation to it, to orient one's life around it in order to be filled continually with the sense of being and meaning that it evokes. In this sense, the hierophany creates a new order of things. No longer do space and time make up a homogeneous continuum; one moment, or one place, has become touched by the sacred, and from that time on, it will provide a means of connecting the two realms, a center that mediates sacred and profane experience. [*See* Orientation.]

This connection may be strengthened in many ways. Jacob set up an altar in the place where he had the dream. Religious man may build his home, village, or city on a sacred site. He may practice a way of life revealed to him by means of a hierophany. Any action may become sacred if it is enacted in imitation of the way the gods have acted. Human life itself becomes assimilated to the sacred paradigm and becomes sanctified insofar as it shares in the numinous quality of the timeless archetype.

A modern example of an orientation governed by an archetype is the ritual Eucharist. In the Mass, the Christian repeats a series of actions that were performed *in illo tempore*, that is, for the Christian, in the beginning of a new age, at a time when God in the person of Christ still walked the earth. By reenacting the Last Supper, the Christian re-creates that sacred time and shares in its sanctity.

The spirituality that is inherent in this form of religion is not otherworldly. The person does not seek to escape this world for another (celestial or unknown) world. Instead, his actions are directed at making profane existence over into a replica of the archetypal world that has been revealed to him. He seeks to realize paradise on earth. For *homo religiosus*, the limits inherent in temporal existence (decay, impermanence, and death) are transcended by imitating and incarnating the eternal patterns. In this way, he abolishes time. Guided by the archetype, he experiences the greatest freedom of his nature: he becomes like one of the gods.

Value of the history of religions. Modern man may regard himself as free precisely because he no longer seeks to emulate a divine paradigm and sees himself, instead, as an unconditioned agent of history (unbound to external models). This is, of course, the inheritance of the Enlightenment, according to which progress is possible only after detachment from the so-called superstitions of the past in order to follow the dictates of a pure reason. In Eliade's view, one may be fully secularized, yet still be the product of a religious inheritance. Self-understanding requires an examination of that inheritance. Eliade suggests, further, that knowledge and the understanding of the religions of one's ancestors can be a source of meaning and value.

In addition, the archetypal themes that influenced his ancestors are still alive for modern man, both consciously and unconsciously. For instance, the difficulties of life can be regarded as obstacles to fulfillment or, interpreted against the archetypal theme of initiation, aspects of an ordeal that may lead to growth and, ultimately, transformation. Exile from one's homeland can be a source of bitterness and regret, or, viewed in light of mythical paradigm, the path of the hero such as Parzival, Odysseus, or even Moses, to name a few for whom the journey brought with it rewards unobtainable to those who remained at home.

Furthermore, in Eliade's view, the archetypal patterns linger on in the unconscious of modern man, serving as themes that motivate and guide him. On a collective level, the search for eternal life seems to underlie much of the science of modern medicine. On the individual level, the person may play out an unconsciously motivated role that has a recognizable mythical form: the hero, the sacred marriage, the wise old woman, the

eternal child. The paradigms appear in numerous constellations with varied force at different times, even during the life of the individual. The insight that governs *homo religiosus*, an insight that Eliade elucidates, is this: there is a difference between the possession of happiness or wealth or power or success, on the one hand, and the realization in one's own life of an archetypal pattern. For the religious man, salvation can never be possessed but must always be embodied.

The Meaning of Archetype in Jung's Psychology. Many people have pointed out the difficulty of presenting a systematic analysis of C. G. Jung's theory of archetypes. This is perhaps a direct result of his method: as a physician, Jung discovered the existence of the archetypal reality through an examination of the subjective experiences of his patients and himself. Therefore, his theory was constantly growing in response to his clinical work. His contribution to a general theory of archetypes lies along the same lines of Philo's thought; like Philo, Jung emphasizes the presence of divine images within man, directing and influencing human development.

At the Eranos seminars in Ascona, Jung and Eliade were able to discuss and compare their ideas on archetypes. As a psychologist knowledgeable in the study of religion, Jung knew and accepted the concepts of Eliade—archetype as transcendent model, the nature of hierophany, and so forth—but, in addition, for Jung, the archetype was also active in determining the inner life of man in both its spiritual and material dimensions.

Instinct. The archetype is most concretely viewed as instinct. Jung states that the archetype

> is not meant to denote an inherited idea, but rather an inherited mode of psychic functioning, corresponding to the inborn way in which the chick emerges from the egg, the bird builds its nest, a certain kind of wasp stings the motor ganglion of the caterpillar, and eels find their way to the Bermudas. In other words, it is a pattern of behavior. This aspect of the archetype is the biological one.
>
> (quoted in Jacobi, 1959, p. 43)

However, the instinctual life of the body is unconscious. It is felt indirectly through drives and compulsions as well as through images that arise spontaneously in dreams and fantasy. It is the imagination that serves to mediate the subjective experience of instinct to the ego. Instinct clothes itself in images taken from everyday experience. The archetypal nature of instinct appears in the numinous quality of many of these images, that is, they have the power to compel one absolutely.

This is not to suggest that, for Jung, the archetype is nothing but instinct. On the contrary, it is the transcendent model that is recognized as having a directive

force in the lives of individual persons even on the biological level. In fact, Jung suggests that *instinct* and *spirit* are simply two different names for the same reality seen from opposing perspectives. What looks like instinct to the outsider is experienced as spirit on the subjective level of inner life. The appearance of the archetypal pattern at different levels of human experience in varying forms is described as projection.

Projection. Employing Eliade's term, Jung might say that the hierophany, or appearance, of the archetype may take place anywhere, even within the unconscious life of the body. The psychological term *projection* simply points to the mode of appearance and not to the ontological status of the archetype, that is, the archetype does not exist as a projection, but rather it appears in projection. This form of speech recalls the metaphor of Plotinus, that the One is reflected by the outer void. In a similar way, we can imagine the archetype reflected (through being projected) on various planes that support the total human experience: the outer world of sense experience, the inner world of imagination, and the unconscious world of the body. In other words, the gods may appear to us on top of a holy mountain, within a dream during a rite of incubation, or even as a bodily compulsion. Still, the transcendent nature of the archetype is not affected. Here, as in all religious language, we encounter the paradox of transcendence and immanence, each capable of an independent existence requiring the existence of the other.

The Religious Meaning of Archetype. The existence of archetypes cannot be proved, but archetypes can be subjectively experienced. Jung often explained that, as a psychologist, he could not prove the existence of God. Nevertheless, in *Face to Face*, his interview with John Freeman for the BBC, he admits that he has no need of belief in God because he has knowledge based on experience. In *Ordeal by Labyrinth*, a book of conversations with Claude-Henri Rocquet, Eliade insists on the religious content of the archetype.

> If God doesn't exist, then everything is dust and ashes. If there is no absolute to give meaning and value to our existence, then that means existence has no meaning. I know there are philosophers who do think precisely that; but for me, that would be not just pure despair but also a kind of betrayal. Because it isn't true and I know that it isn't true.
>
> (Eliade, 1982, p. 67)

Even when employed in the twentieth century by a historian of religions and a psychologist, the ancient term *archetype* retains the religious significance that it had for three religious philosophers during the first centuries of the common era. Referring both to the sacred model and to its appearance within the world of phe-

nomena, the archetype is meaningless in any system of thought that denies the reality of a transcendent principle. In other words, the term suggests a view of creation according to which this world depends for its very nature on some reality outside itself.

[See also the biography of C. G. Jung and the entry Transcendence and Immanence. For a discussion of the role of archetypal symbols in the history of religions, see Iconography.]

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BEVERLY MOON

ARCHITECTURE. [*This article presents a thematic overview of religious architecture. Monuments associated with prehistoric religious practices are discussed in* Megalithic Religion; Paleolithic Religion; *and* Prehistoric Religions.]

Architecture may be defined as the art of building, and consequently *religious architecture* refers to those buildings planned to serve religious purposes. These structures can be either very simple or highly complex. They can take the form of a circle of upright stones (megaliths) defining a sacred space or they may spread over acres like the sanctuary at Angkor Wat. They can be of any and every material from the mounds of earth reared over royal tombs to the reinforced concrete and glass of twentieth-century houses of worship.

Yet the practice of religion does not of itself require an architectural setting. Sacrifice can be offered to the gods in the open air on a hilltop; the adherents of Islam can perform their daily prayers in a railroad car or even in the street; the Christian Eucharist can be celebrated in a hospital ward. Nevertheless all the major world religions have buildings especially planned for their use, and these constitute an important source of knowledge about these faiths. They can reveal what is believed

about the nature of the gods; they can provide insight into the character of the communities for which they were designed and the cultus celebrated therein.

To comprehend and appreciate the significance of these buildings it is necessary to classify them, but their variety is so great that one single method would be incomplete. Hence several typologies have to be devised if the subject matter is to be covered adequately; indeed it is possible to identify at least four. In the first place, the vocabulary applied to religious buildings can be taken as the basis for the formulation of a typology. This, however, is by no means exhaustive, and so it is essential to move on to a second typology derived from the character or nature ascribed to each building, which may differ depending upon whether it is regarded as a divine dwelling, a center of reference, a monument, or a meeting house. A third typology may be presented by analyzing the functions for which each building provides, including the service of the gods, religious teaching, the manifestation of reverence and devotion, congregational worship, and symbolization. A fourth typology is architectural rather than religious but needs to be noted: this is based upon the categories of path and place. Other factors that should be borne in mind for a complete picture relate to the different materials used, the effect of climate, culture and its expression in different styles, and also the influence of patronage.

Classification according to Terms Used. The terms used to refer to religious buildings provide a preliminary indication of both their variety and their significance.

Terms that designate a structure as a shelter. These may be further differentiated according to the class of being or thing associated with them.

For gods. The Hebrew *beit Elohim* is to be translated "house of God," while *heikhal*, a loanword from Sumerian through Babylonian *e-kallu)*, is used for a very special house or palace. In Greek there is *naos*, from *naio*, "to dwell in," and *kuriakos* ("of the Lord") lies at the origin of both *kirk* and *church*. In Latin there is *aedes sacra*, a "sacred edifice," as well as *domus dei*, a "god's home." *Tabernacle* (Lat., *tabernaculum* from *taberna*, a "hut") has a similar domiciliary connotation. Hinduism has *prāsāda*, or platform of a god, and *devalaya*, a residence of a god, while the Japanese word for shrine is literally "honorable house."

For objects. In English the primary term is *shrine*, derived from *scrinium*, which means a case that contains sacred things. More specifically there is *chapel* from *capella* ("cloak"), referring to the garment of Saint Martin that was venerated in a small building; there is *cathedral*, which shows that the particular church is

where the bishop's *cathedra*, or throne, is located. *Pagoda*, which is a deformation of the Sinhala *dagoba*, is a tower containing relics. *Agyari*, a place of fire, is the designation of a Parsi temple in which the sacred flame is kept alight. The Temple of the Sleeping Buddha in Peking characterizes the form of the statue within.

For humans. The Latin *domus ecclesiae* points to the Christian community as the occupant of a building. *Beit ha-keneset* in Hebrew and *sunagōgē* in Greek (from *sunagō*, "to gather together"), with *synagogue*, as the English transliteration, denote a place of assembly. The term used by Quakers, *meeting house*, has the same implication.

Terms that indicate the character of a structure. In Greek there is *to hagion*, the place of dread, from *azomai*, "to stand in awe of," and *to hieron*, the "holy place." In Latin *adytum* is a transliteration of the Greek *aduton*, "not to be entered," because it is the holy abode of a divinity. *Templum* is a space cut off; it comes from *tempus*, meaning a "division" or "section," which in turn derives from the Greek *temenos*, referring to an area set apart for a particular purpose such as the service of a god. *Temple* in English has the same etymology, while *sanctuary (sanctus)* emphasizes the holiness of the building.

Terms that affirm an association with a person or events. To speak of Saint Paul's Cathedral in London is to declare a link with the apostle. The Süleymaniye Mosque complex in Istanbul commemorates its patron, Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent. The Roman Pantheon, which is latinized Greek *(pantheion)*, was dedicated to "all the gods." The Anastasis in Jerusalem commemorates the resurrection *(anastasis)* of Jesus. *Basilica* denotes a public building with royal *(basileus)* links. The generic term is *marturion* (Lat., *martyrium*), from *martureo*, "to be a witness." Such an edifice is a monument or memorial; the two terms are synonymous—the one from *moneo*, "to remind," and the other from *memor*, "to remember." It therefore preserves or promotes the memory of a person or event; the English Cathedral of Saint Albans, for example, commemorates a martyred saint, and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem recalls the birth of Christ.

Terms descriptive of the activity for which a building is used. The Hebrew *devir*, which denotes the holy of holies in the Jerusalem Temple, may suggest an oracle, from a verb meaning to "speak" in which case it is similar to the Latin *fanum*, from *fari*, "to speak," especially of oracles. *Proseuke* (Gr.) and *oratorium* (Lat.), in English *oratory*, or place of prayer, all point to a particular form of religious devotion. *Baptistery* (Gr., *baptizō*, "to dip") specifies ceremonial action, and *mosque*

(Arab., *masjid*, "place of prostration" [before God]), the place of an action.

Terms indicative of the shape of the edifice. These relate mainly to funerary architecture: *tholos*, a "dome" or "vault," signifies a round tomb; *tomb* itself comes from *tumulus*, a sepulchral mound; *pyramid* suggests a geometric form and is at the same time the designation of a pharaoh's resting place; *mastabah* is the Arabic for a bench that describes the shape of a tomb; *stupa*, from the Sanskrit *stūpa* (Pali, *thūpa*), signifies a reliquary "mound" or tower; *ziggurat*, from the Babylonian *ziqqurratu*, meaning "mountain peak" or "pinnacle," is descriptive of the superimposed terraces that make up this structure.

Typology according to Character. Granting the unavoidable overlap, four main types may be specified.

Divine dwelling. Taking pride of place, because the majority of terms in use emphasize this particular category, is the structure that is regarded as a divine habitation. Since the chief occupant enjoys divine status, the model is believed to have been provided from above. Gudea, ruler of Lagash in the third millennium BCE, was shown the plans of his temple by the goddess herself. The shrine of Amaterasu, the Japanese sun goddess, was built according to the directions provided by an oracle. Various passages in the Hebrew scriptures (Old Testament) indicate that the Tabernacle and the Temple were considered to have transcendent exemplars. Yahveh's instructions to Moses were to this effect: "Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. According to all that I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it. . . . And see that you make them after the pattern for them, which is being shown you on the mountain" (*Ex.* 25:8f., 25:40). Similarly, when David gave the plans of the Temple of Solomon, it is reported: "All this he made clear by the writing from the hand of the Lord concerning it, all the work to be done according to the plan" (*1 Chr.* 28:19). In the *Wisdom of Solomon*, the king is represented as saying that what he has built is "a copy of the holy tabernacle which you did prepare aforehand from the beginning" (9:8). The author of the *Letter to the Hebrews* reproduces the same idea when he describes the Temple and its furniture as "a copy and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary" and as "copies of the heavenly things" (*Heb.* 8:5, 9:23). [*See* Biblical Temple.]

The work of the divine architects is frequently held to include not only god-houses but entire cities. Sennacherib received the design of Nineveh drawn in a heavenly script. The New Jerusalem, in the prophet Ezekiel's vision, is described in the greatest detail, with precise di-

mensions included. The Indian holy city of Banaras is thought to have been not only planned but actually built by Siva. [*See* Jerusalem *and* Banaras.]

Similar ideas are present in Christian thought from the fourth century onward. When large churches came to be built, as distinct from the previous small house-churches, recourse was had to the Old Testament for precedent, since the New Testament provided no guidance. Thus the basilica came to be regarded as an imitation of the Jerusalem Temple: the atrium corresponded to the forecourt, the nave to the holy place (*heikhal*), and the area round the altar to the holy of holies (*devir*). By the thirteenth century it was normal to consider a Gothic cathedral as an image of the heavenly Jerusalem, a reflection of heaven on earth.

Divine presence. The presence of the god may be represented in a number of ways, most frequently by statues as, for example, in Egyptian, Greek, and Hindu temples, and alternatively by a bas-relief, as at the Temple of Baal in Palmyra. The building is then appropriately called a shrine. The Hebrews, forbidden to have graven images of deity, which were dismissed as idols, took the ark as the center of their devotion and this eventually was regarded as a throne upon which Yahveh sat invisible. Again, mosaics or paintings can be employed, notably in the apses of early Christian basilicas or on the iconostases of Eastern Orthodox churches. But in certain religions, the entire structure is regarded as a revelation of the deity. Greek sanctuaries were so conceived, and to this day Hindu temples are not only places but objects of reverence, evoking the divine.

Precisely because this type of building is regarded as the mundane dwelling of a deity, constructed according to a transcendental blueprint, it is also understood as a meeting place of gods and humans. So the ziggurat of Larsa, in lower Babylonia, was called "the house of the bond between heaven and earth." This link may be physically represented by a sacred object (see figure 1).
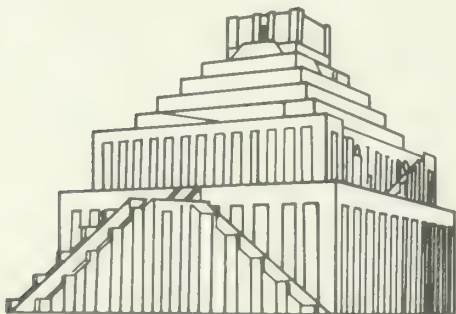

FIGURE 1. *Meeting Place of Heaven and Earth.* Modern model of a Babylonian ziggurat of the sixth century BCE.

The Ka'bah in Mecca, the holiest shrine of Islam, is the symbol of the intersection between the vertical axis of the spirit and the horizontal plane of human existence: a hollow cube of stone, it is the *axis mundi* of Islamic cosmology. In other religions wooden poles or stone pillars fulfill the same function; such were the *asherim* of the Canaanites reported in the Old Testament. The finial of a Buddhist stupa is conceived to be the top of a pillar passing through the whole structure and providing the point of contact between earth and heaven.

The divine is also associated with mountains that rear up into the sky; Olympus in ancient Greece was one such place, and in the myths of the Maasai, Mount Kilimanjaro on the border of Kenya and Tanzania is dubbed the "house of god." This symbolism can be applied to the religious building itself. Each Egyptian temple was believed to represent the primordial hillock, while the Babylonian ziggurats were artificial high places. Hindu temples, such as the one at Ellora, are sometimes called Kailasa, which is the name of Śiva's sacred mountain. Their superstructure is known as the "crest" (*śikhara*) of a hill, and the contours and tiered arrangement of the whole building derive from a desire to suggest the visual effect of a mountain (see figure 2).

Sacred and profane. As noted above, while a religious building can be called a house, it is not any kind of house: there is something special about it, and hence words denoting "great house" or "palace" are used. But its particular distinction derives from the nature of the being who inhabits it and who invests it with something of his or her own character. In most religions the divine is a being apart; his or her habitation must consequently be a building apart, and so it is regarded as a holy place in sharp opposition to profane space.

To speak of the sacred and the profane in this way is to refer to two antithetical entities. The one is potent, full of power, while the other is powerless. They cannot therefore approach one another without losing their proper nature: either the sacred will consume the profane or the profane will contaminate and enfeeble the sacred. The sacred is therefore dangerous. It both attracts and repels human beings—it attracts them because it is the source of power, and it repels them because to encounter it is to be in peril. The sacred is "the wholly other"; it is a reality of an entirely different order from "natural realities." Contacts can only be intermittent and must be strictly regulated by rites, which can have either a positive or a negative character. Among the former are rites of consecration whereby someone or something is introduced into the realm of the holy. The negative takes the form of prohibitions, raising barriers between the two. These rites allow a certain coming and going between the two spheres since

they provide the conditions within which intercourse is possible. But any attempt, outside the prescribed limits, to unite sacred and profane brings confusion and disaster.

Underlying all this dualism is the concept of two worlds: a sacred world and a secular world. Two realms of being are envisaged, and this opposition finds its visible expression in holy places. The sacred space, defined by the religious building or precinct, is first of all a means of ensuring the isolation and so the preservation of both the sacred and the profane. The wall that keeps the one out also serves to keep the other in; it is the demarcation line (*temenos, tempus, templum*) between the two worlds (see figure 3). But within the sacred enclosure, the profane world is transcended and hence the existence of the holy place makes it possible for humans to pass from one world to another. The door or gate is then an object of great importance, for it is the means of moving from profane to sacred space. The name *Babylon* itself literally means "gate of the gods," and Jacob at Bethel declared: "This is the gate of heaven." In the same realm of ideas is to be found the royal doors that provide access through the iconostasis to the altar of the Eastern Orthodox church and the "Gates of Paradise," which is the name given by Michelangelo to Lorenzo Ghiberti's sculpted doors at the Florence Baptistery.

The precise location of these holy places is ultimately determined by their association with divine beings. The Nabataean high place at Petra is legitimized by being on a mountain top that, as seen above, has religious
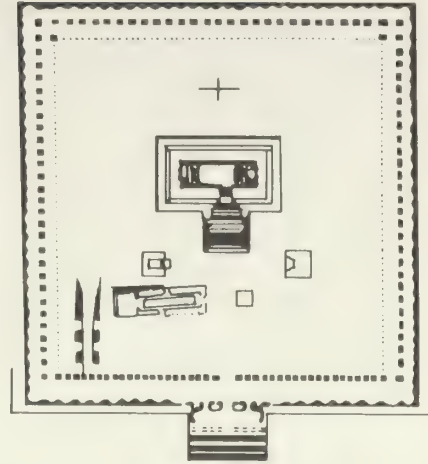

FIGURE 3. *Sacred Precinct.* Ground plan, *temenos* of the Temple of Bel, Palmyra, Syria; first to third century CE. Plan shows temple wall, gate, and sacrificial altar.

connotations. Equally holy were caves, linked in the religious consciousness with the womb, rebirth, the darkness of Hades, initiation rites, and so forth: many a Hindu holy place enshrines a cavern in a cliff. A theophany too constitutes a holy place. David knew where to build the Temple in Jerusalem because of a manifestation at the threshing floor of Araunah (Ornan) the Jebusite. Under the Roman empire, augurs were consulted, sacrifices offered, and the divine will thereby discovered. The shrine at Monte Sant'Angelo in the Gargano (c. 1076) was built because it was believed that the archangel Michael had visited the place. Similarly the sixteenth-century Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe, near Mexico City, marks the spot where the Virgin Mary presented herself to a peasant. Rites of consecration can act as substitutes if there is a lack of any definite command from above; by their means a space is declared set apart, and the god is besought to take up residence with confidence that the prayer will be answered.

Center of reference. Both individuals and communities require some center of reference for their lives so that amid the vagaries of a changing world there is a pivot that may provide an anchor in the ultimate. Religious buildings can and do constitute such centers to such an extent that the idea of a middle point has been taken quite literally. Every Egyptian temple was considered to be located where creation began and was therefore the navel of the earth. In Jewish thought the selfsame term has been applied to Jerusalem, and the site of the Temple is held to be the place of the original act of creation. In Greek religion it was the shrine of Apollo at Delphi that was declared to be the earth's midpoint. According to Hinduism, Meru is the axial

FIGURE 2. *Representation of the Sacred Mountain.* Temple of Bṛhadīśvara, Thanjavur, India; c. 1000 CE.

mountain at the center of the universe, and the name *Meru* is also used in Bali for the superstructure of a temple. The main shrine of the Tenrikyō sect of Shintō at Tenrishi marks the cradle of the human race and encloses a sacred column indicating the center of the world.

Within the same ambit of ideas is the view that a religious building may be related to cosmic forces and therefore assist in geomancy. Hence, for example, the monumental structures at Teotihuacán in Mexico are arranged within a vast precinct in such a way as to observe the relations of the earth to the sun. The orientation of Christian churches so that their sanctuary is at the east end is another way of affirming this cosmic link, while the concern of Hindu architects for the proportions and measurements of their designs rests upon the conviction that the universe as a whole has a mathematical basis that must be embodied in every temple.

In Hinduism too the temple plan functions as a *maṇḍala*—a sacred geometrical diagram of the essential structure of the cosmos. This interpretation of religious buildings is widespread in time and space. The "big house" of the Delaware Indians of North America stands for the world: its floor is the earth, the four walls are the four quarters, and the vault is the sky. An identical understanding of Christian churches is to be found as early as the seventh century and is typical of Eastern Orthodox thought; the roof of Saint Sophia in Edessa was compared to the heavens, its mosaic to the firmament, and its arches to the four corners of the earth. Medieval cathedrals in the West, such as the one at Chartres, were similarly regarded as models of the cosmos and as providing foretastes of the heavenly Jerusalem.

Monument or memorial. The essentials of a sacred place are location and spatial demarcation rather than buildings, but when there are edifices, they too serve to locate and spatially demarcate. Their importance is to be found not so much in the specific area as in the events that occurred there and that they bring to remembrance. In other words the locations are mainly associated with notable happenings in the life of a religious founder or with the exploits of gods and goddesses, and they stand as memorials (remembrancers) or monuments (reminders). One of the units in the complex erected by Emperor Constantine in fourth-century Jerusalem was known as the Martyrium, the testimony to or evidence and proof of the reality of Christ's death and resurrection, which were believed to have occurred at that very site. Also in Jerusalem is the Muslim Dome of the Rock, which enshrines the spot whence the prophet Muḥammad is believed to have ascended to heaven (see figure 4), a site already associated in Jewish
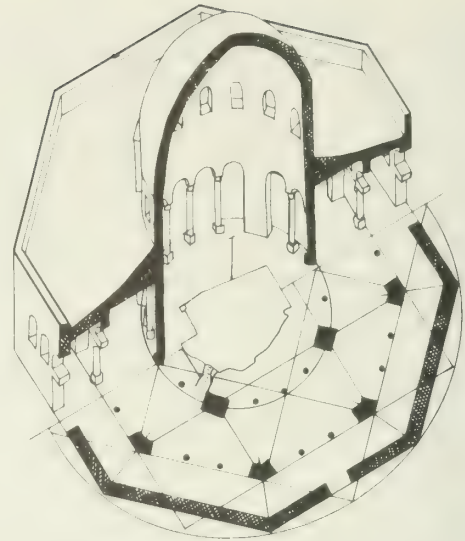

FIGURE 4. *Memorial or Monument.* Ground plan and elevation, Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem; 689–691. The rock (outlined in the center of the drawing) from which Muḥammad ascended to heaven is enshrined by the building.

tradition with Solomon's Temple, the tomb of Adam, and the sacrifice of Isaac. At Bodh Gayā in the state of Bihar, India, the Mahābodhi Temple is situated in front of the Bodhi Tree under which Gautama attained enlightenment. At Sarnath, near Banaras, a stupa commemorates the Buddha's first sermon delivered in the Deer Park to five ascetics.

Not only founders but also individual followers may be honored in this way. Numerous stupas are monuments to Buddhist sages, and many a martyrium in the days of the early church was set up on the very spot where a martyr (*martus*, "witness") had testified to his faith with his blood. The buildings also serve as shrines to protect their remains and can therefore be classified as tombs. Indeed every tomb that assumes a monumental character is a reminder of the dead, whether in the form of separate memorials to individuals, as found in the Père-Lachaise cemetery in Paris, or of a single edifice to a person representative of many, such as the tomb of the unknown warrior beneath the Arc de Triomphe in the same city.

Many religious buildings that function as memorials enclose space: the pyramids of Giza have within them the burial chambers of pharaohs; the Cenotaph in London, on the other hand, a monument to the dead of two world wars shelters nothing. It corresponds to the second of the four fundamental modes of monumental architecture. First, there is the precinct, which shows the limits of the memorial area and finally develops through a typological series to the stadium. Second is

the cairn, which makes the site visible from afar and indicates its importance, the ultimate development of this type is the pyramid. Third is the path that signals a direction and can take the sophisticated form of a colonnaded street, thus dignifying the approach to the main shrine. Fourth, there is the hut that acts as a sacred shelter, with the cathedral as one of its most developed types.

Meetinghouse. A religious building that is regarded as a divine dwelling, or *domus dei*, is a meeting place of heaven and earth, but when it is understood as a meetinghouse, it is more correctly styled a *domus ecclesiae* because it is a building where the people of god assemble. Solomon had been led to question the validity of the temple type when he asked "Will God indeed dwell upon earth?" (*1 Kgs.* 8:27). However, it was not until the birth of Christianity that a full-scale attack was directly launched upon the whole idea of an earthly divine domicile; in the words of Stephen, "The Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands" (*Acts* 7:48). In the light of the later development of Christian thought it is difficult to appreciate how revolutionary this new attitude was.

The early believers committed themselves to an enfleshed god, to one who was no longer apart or afar off but had drawn near; at his sacrificial death the Temple veil had split in two so that the Holy of Holies was no longer fenced off. The living community now became the temple of the divine presence. A new concept of the holy was minted: there can no longer be anything common or profane for Christians *(pro,* "in front of," or outside the *fanum)* since they constitute the *naos* of the Holy Spirit (*1 Cor.* 3:16). The dining room of a private house is a suitable venue for the assembly; the proud
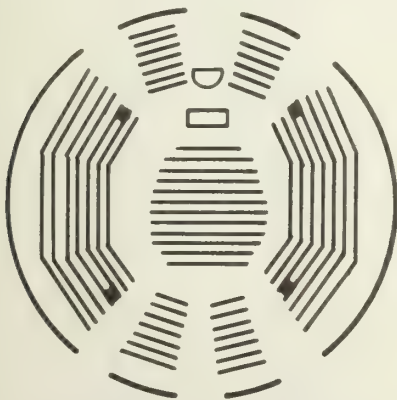

FIGURE 5. *Meetinghouse.* Ground plan, Reformed (Calvinist) Temple du Paradis, Lyons, France; 1564. Rows of benches in circular arrangement exemplify the congregational and egalitarian concept of worship. The pulpit as focal point emphasizes the role of preaching.

boast is that "we have no temples and no altars" (Minucius Felix, c. 200). All this was to change drastically in the fourth century when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman empire and took over the public functions of the pagan cults. It was not until the Protestant Reformation that the New Testament understanding was given a fresh lease of life when divines such as John Calvin objected to the idea of special holy places (see figure 5). Such a view is not peculiar to Christianity; Judaism has its synagogues for meeting together, and Islam has its mosques, which are equally congregational. If a building as a divine dwelling is at one end of a spectrum, then the meetinghouse is at the other extreme.

Typology According to Function. The different types of building just delineated provide for the fulfillment of certain purposes in that they accommodate religious activities; it is consequently both possible and necessary to specify a second typology according to function, which stems from but also complements the previous typology according to character.

Service of the deities. At home, resident within their temples, the gods require their devotees to perform certain services for them. Perhaps the most striking illustration of need is provided by the toilet ceremonies of ancient Egypt. Each morning the cult image was asperged, censed, anointed, vested, and crowned. At the present day very similar ceremonies are conducted in Hindu temples, where the images are cooled with water in hot weather, anointed, clad in beautiful clothes, and garlanded. During the day it used to be the custom to divert them with the performances of the *devadāsī*s, or temple dancers. At night they are accompanied by a procession to their beds. Food may be provided, from the simple gift of grain in an African village to the hecatombs of Classical Greece. Another normal form of worship is sacrifice, ranging from human victims to a dove or pigeon, from the first fruits of the harvest to shewbread.

Positive and negative functions. The motives for such services can be diverse; sometimes they are prompted by the concern to provide sustenance, while at other times they are to establish communion, to propitiate, to seek favors. Functions now become reciprocal: the service of the gods is expected to obtain a response from the gods, in that they now serve human needs. Two examples, for many, will suffice to illustrate this.

Since the temple is a divine dwelling, to enter its precincts is to come into the presence of the god and so be under his or her protection. As a sacred place, the building is inviolable, and no one can be removed from it by force; to do so would be sacrilege, since a person who is inside the area of holiness has been invested with some

of the sacredness inherent in it and thus cannot be touched as long as he or she does not emerge. This is the rationale of sanctuary as it was practiced in the classical world. The most famous case was that of Demosthenes who in 322 BCE sought sanctuary in the Temple of Poseidon on the island of Calauria. When, in the post-Constantine era, church buildings were included in the same class as pagan temples, as specially holy places, it was natural that the idea of sanctuary should also be connected to them. The right of fugitives to remain under the protection of their god became legally recognized and in western Europe continued to be so for centuries; indeed, in England it was not until 1723 that all rights of sanctuary were finally declared null.

The second example of the gods themselves fulfilling a function on behalf of their followers is the practice of incubation. This is a method of obtaining divine favors by passing a length of time in one of their houses, usually sleeping there. Its primary aspect is medical, to obtain a cure, either immediately or after obeying the divine will disclosed in a vision. In the Temple of Ptah at Memphis therapeutic oracles were delivered and various remedies were revealed through dreams to those who slept there. The two principal healing gods in the Greek and Roman pantheons were Asklepios and Sarapis, and there is record of a shrine of the former at Aegae where those who passed the night were restored to health. The apparent success of these two gods ensured their continued popularity, and their cults only fell into disuse when churches replaced their temples as centers of healing believed to be accomplished by Christ through his saints. Among the most successful of the Christian holy men to cure illness were Cosmas and Damian, to whom a church was dedicated in Constantinople. Running this center a close second was the Church of Saint Menas near Alexandria; there some patients stayed for over a year and the church itself was so completely filled with mattresses and couches that they had to overflow into the sacristy. Incubation has had a continuous history down to the present day; in eastern Europe, for example, it can still be witnessed.

These several functions may all be regarded as positive in character, but a corollary of viewing a religious building as a holy place is the requirement for negative rituals to safeguard it by purifying those who wish to enter. Such rituals determine some of the furnishing, and so, for example, the forecourts of mosques have tanks and/or fountains for ablutions. Holy water stoups are to be found just inside the entrance of Roman Catholic churches; baptismal fonts were originally placed either in rooms separate from the main worship area or in entirely distinct buildings. The removal of shoes before entering a Hindu temple, of hats before going into

a Christian church—all of these testify to the seriousness of entering a holy place. Many religious buildings have guardians to protect their entrances. The giant figures in the royal complex at Bangkok, the bull Nandin in the temples of Śiva, the scenes of the Last Judgment in the tympana over the west doors into medieval cathedrals—these are but a few examples.

Determination of form. The interior disposition of those religious buildings conceived to be divine dwellings is very much determined by the forms of the services offered. Where, for example, processions are a habitual feature of the ceremonial, then corridors for circumambulation have to be designed, as in the complex of Horus at Idfu (see figure 6); this also explains the labyrinthine character of many Hindu temples. When a statue is only to be seen by a special priesthood and has to be shielded from profane gaze, an inner chamber is created, often entirely dark, to protect humankind from the brilliant light of the divine presence, and this sanctuary may be protected itself by a series of surrounding rooms or courtyards. Where there are sacrifices, altars are needed, but these are frequently outside the shrine so that the individual worshiper can actually witness what the priest is doing with his or her gift. Classical Greek temples sheltered statues of the tutelary deities, but the all-important altars were outside; on the Athenian Acropolis, for example, it was in front of the Parthenon. Sometimes altars can themselves be architectural in character: the Altar of Zeus of Pergamum (c. 180 BCE, see figure 7), now in Berlin, has a crepidoma measuring 36.44 by 34.20 meters, and the Altar
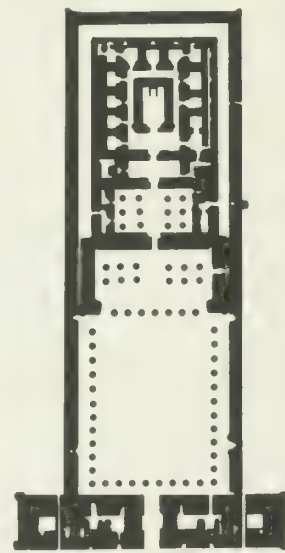

FIGURE 6. *Processional Way and Protected Inner Sanctuary.* Ground plan, Temple of Horus, Idfu, Egypt; 237–207. Design allows for circumambulation.

FIGURE 7. *Place of Sacrifice.* Altar of Zeus, Pergamum (modern Bergama, Turkey); c. 180 BCE. Altar itself constitutes an architectural structure.

of Hieron II (276–222 BCE) at Syracuse is some 200 meters long and 27 wide.

Conveyance of revelation and teaching. As a center of reference, a religious building may accommodate activities that convey meaning, guidance, and instruction in the faith. Many Babylonian temples, for example, were sources of divination and even had a full complement of soothsayers, exorcists, and astrologers. Taoist temples equally are resorted to for divinatory purposes. The oracle was consulted at Delphi, to instance the greatest focus of this activity in the ancient world. The Jewish Temple in Jerusalem had cultic prophets on its staff.

Where a sacred book is central to a religion, provision for its reading and exposition has to be made. In synagogues there has to be a shrine for the Torah and a desk from which to comment on the text. In Christian churches there are lecterns for the Bible and pulpits for the sermon. Islam has its stands for the Qur'ān, and its *minbar* is the equivalent of the Christian pulpit, although the shape differs in that it is a miniature flight of stairs rising away from the congregation whom the preacher faces down the steps. Sikh worship concentrates on the reading of the Granth, which is accompanied by prayers and exposition. In these ways religious buildings function as centers of meaning.

Manifestation of reverence and celebration of festivals. The religious building as memorial, it will be recalled, often contains relics of religious founders or particularly saintly people. Reverence for these can be shown by visitation, sometimes to offer thanks for benefits received and sometimes to petition for help. Those who seek healing go in great numbers to the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes to bathe in the sacred spring. In this and similar instances the designs of the buildings are affected by the need to accommodate the sick for short or long stays. In the Muslim world the virtue of a saint is believed to be available to those who follow him (or her) or touch some object associated with him. If he

be dead, then his tomb, which is his memorial, becomes a center of his supernatural power *(barakah)* and attracts many visitors. Pilgrimages are one of the forms that these visits may take. So too Hindus travel to Hardwar (North India), which displays a footprint of Viṣṇu in stone. Jains go to Mount Abu, also in India, where the last *tīrthaṅkara* (guide), named Mahāvira, spent the thirty-seventh year of his life. Buddhists go to Adam's Peak in Sri Lanka, where there is a footprint of Gautama; adherents of Islam make the *ḥajj* to Mecca, and indeed it is one of the five duties of Islam. Christians have their holy places in Israel and Jordan or visit the catacombs in Rome.

Festivals are the celebrations of the births or deaths of saints, and they commemorate key events in the sacred history of a religion. For Jews, to celebrate Passover in Jerusalem is a traditional goal. For Christians, too, there is a certain fittingness in observing Christmas, the Feast of the Nativity, in Bethlehem itself. Religious buildings then function as centers for such celebrations.

Congregational worship. It is important, if this particular category is to be appreciated, to distinguish it clearly, despite some overlap, from the service of the deities described above, with which it can easily be confused. The essential difference can be made plain by applying the term *cult* to the first function and reserving *worship* for this fourth one. The basic understanding of *cult* is evident from its etymology. It derives from *colere,* which means "to till the ground" and hence to take care of, or attend to, with the aim that the object of attention should bear fruit or produce some benefit. Next it signifies "to honor" and finally "to worship." The cultus is therefore a cultivating of the gods, a cherishing of them, seeing to their needs; it is the bestowal of labor upon them and the manifestation of regard toward them. There is more than a hint of doing something to obtain a favor, as in the phrase "to cultivate someone's acquaintance." Cultus stems from the human side, whereas worship, as it is used here to describe this fourth function, is from the side of the gods. Not only are they the ones who provide the form and matter of worship, but through it they come to encounter their community.

Worship of this kind is characterized as congregational to differentiate it further from cultus, which is primarily individualistic. Worship then is meeting: the religious building is the meeting house. What takes place is not an activity aimed at or on behalf of the gods; the gods take the initiative. Hence worship is a memorial celebration of the saving deeds of the gods, and by it the people are created and renewed again and again. So, in Christian terms, the Body of Christ (the

Christian community) progressively becomes what it is by feeding upon the sacramental body of Christ. Worship fosters community identity, and hence in the chapels of Christian monasteries the seating frequently faces inward, thus promoting a family atmosphere.

The precise interior disposition of a building will also depend upon the particular understanding or form of the communal rite. Religions which center on a book of revelation, such as Judaism, Islam, and Sikhism, require auditoria. Protestantism, concentrating upon the word of God, similarly tends to arrange its congregations in rows suitable for an audience (*audientes*, a group of "hearers"). Roman Catholicism, with its greater emphasis on the Mass, stresses the visual dominance of the altar, which is now no longer outside the building, as with Roman and Greek exemplars, but inside.

If the act of worship is understood to be conducted by a professional hierarchy on behalf of the community as a whole, then some separation is likely, ranging from the Eastern Orthodox iconostasis at one extreme to communion rails at others. Where there is no sharp differentiation of role, as in Islam (since the imam is simply a prayer leader and is in no sense an ordained minister), the space is not partitioned; instead there is

FIGURE 9. *Symbolization of Death and Resurrection.* Ground plan, Baptistery of the Cathedral of Aquileia, Italy; sixth century. The hexagonal shape of the font refers to the sixth day of the week, Friday, the day on which Jesus died. The octagonal shape of the building, evoking the number eight, is understood to refer to the first day of a new week, Sunday, the day of Christ's resurrection.
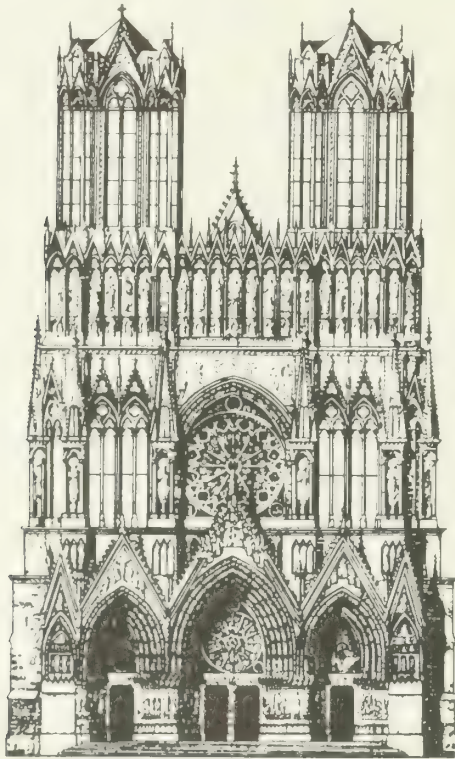

FIGURE 8. *Manifestation of Power.* West front, Cathedral of Reims, France; completed c. 1481. Shape, dimension, and detail underscore the majesty of the divine.
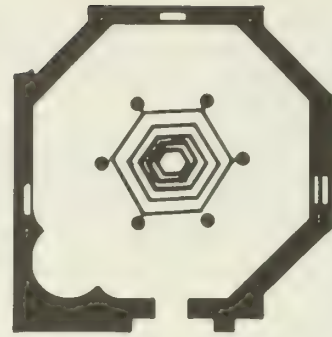
lateral disposition, with the worshipers shoulder to shoulder facing toward Mecca.

Symbolization. On whatever basis a typology of religious buildings may be constructed and whatever purposes they may serve, there is one overall function that must be considered: symbolization. Each building proclaims certain beliefs about the deities to whom it is dedicated. One has only to contrast a Gothic cathedral with a Quaker meeting house to appreciate this. The former in all its grandeur speaks of a god who is high and lifted up, remote, awesome in majesty, fearful in judgment, demanding obeisance (see figure 8); the latter in all its simplicity witnesses to a being who is to be known in the midst of life, who is not separate, whose dwelling is with humankind, offering fellowship. The one speaks of power and might, the other of self-emptying and servanthood.

Sometimes the symbolism is intellectually apprehended before it is given visible form, and then it needs interpretation. Baptism, for example, is a sacrament of dying and rising with Christ. A detached baptistery may be hexagonal or octagonal: in the former case it refers to the sixth day of the week, Friday, on which Jesus died and in the latter, to the eighth day, or the first day of a new week when he rose from the dead (see figure 9). The dome, surmounting many a baptistery, is also a habitual feature of Byzantine churches and Muslim mosques, and as the baldachin or canopy it can enshrine any holy object or complete a memorial structure. Its popularity derives from its ideological context: it is a representation of the transcendental realm, an image of heaven. It is a not-inappropriate roofing for tombs (see figure 10), and many baptisteries took the shape of contemporary burial edifices precisely because

of the meaning of the purificatory rite. Different parts of a building can have their own messages: towers declare heavenly aspirations; monumental doorways can impress with regal authority. Sculpture, painting, mosaic can and do fulfill a symbolic function. Gargoyles ward off evil spirits; paintings recall events or persons in sacred history; Christ as *creator mundi* holds his worshipers within his downward gaze. The handling of light is frequently symbolic. In a mosque it testifies to God as the light of heaven and earth; in Gothic architecture it is a basic constituent and is regarded as a manifestation of the glory of God.

Architectural Types. There is yet another typology to be reviewed that applies to all buildings whatever their function, and religious buildings are no exception. This is a dual typology that divides structures into the categories of path and place. For a path to be identifiable, it must have (1) strong edges, (2) continuity, (3) directionality, (4) recognizable landmarks, (5) a sharp terminal, and (6) end-from-end distinction. For a place to be identifiable, it must be (1) concentrated in form with pronounced borders, (2) a readily comprehensible shape, (3) limited in size, (4) a focus for gathering, (5) capable of being experienced as an inside in contrast to a surrounding exterior, and (6) largely nondirectional.

The application of these types to religious buildings can be briefly illustrated by contrasting a basilica and a centralized mosque. A basilica is a path leading toward the altar; every detail of the design confirms this (see figure 11). The nave, framed by aisles, has firm edges; there is continuity provided by floor patterns and advancing rows of columns, which themselves indicate
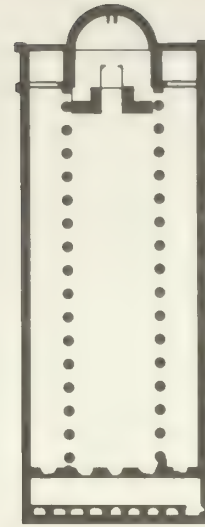
FIGURE 11. *The Path.* Ground plan, Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome, Italy; 432–440. All attention focuses upon the altar.

a direction—everything points toward the holy table framed in a triumphal arch and backed by the embracing shape of the apse. For a pilgrim people, for those who have here no abiding city, such a royal road is obviously very appropriate. A centralized mosque, on the other hand such as those designed by Sinan in Istanbul, suggests no movement, it is a place, a point of reference and gathering, it is concentrated (see figure 12). Once within, there is no incentive to leave and every enticement to stay. Embodying perfect equipoise, it promotes contemplation; it is indeed embracing architecture. Its
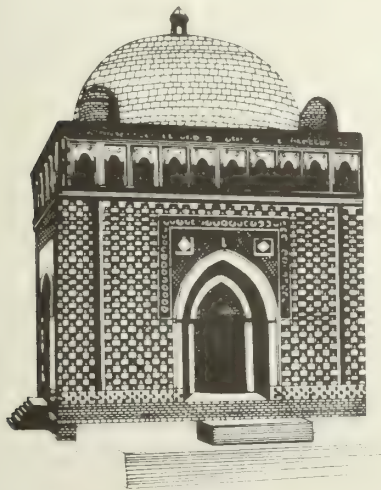
FIGURE 10. *Dome as Image of Heaven.* Mausoleum of Ismael Samanid, Bukhara (modern Bukhara Oblast, Uzbek S.S.R.); tenth century. The image of heaven canopies the dead.
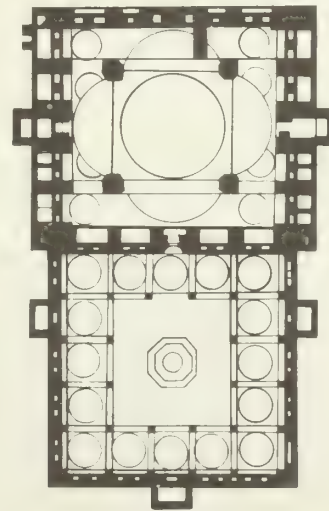
FIGURE 12. *Gathering Place.* Ground plan, Sehzade Mosque, Istanbul, Turkey; 1548. Design and shape illumine the omnipresence of the divine.

spaciousness expresses not the specificity of the Christian doctrine of the incarnation but the omnipresence of the divine; it manifests *tawḥīd*, which is the metaphysical doctrine of the divine unity as the source and culmination of all diversity.

The difference then between basilica and mosque is not stylistic; they are distinct architectural types, which in these two instances correspond to each religion's self-understanding. This circumstance does not, however, provide support for the nineteenth-century theory that every religion develops its own supreme architectural form to best express its ethos and spirit. The character of any building at any epoch is affected by many factors: technical aptitude, climate, availability of materials, function, and so on. Patronage has also played an important role. The Temple in Jerusalem, for example, was in origin Solomon's royal chapel, and indeed, not a few English medieval churches were on the estates of local lords, who regarded them as their own possessions. One effect of this influence was the monumentalization of many religious buildings: they were designed to display the power and authority not only of a heavenly being but of an earthly ruler. In this way many a Mughal mosque in India proclaimed the might of the ruling house. Royal, princely, and ducal boxes and galleries were inserted, and in western Europe the well-to-do could provide for their continued well-being by constructing private chantry chapels within existing parish churches. Communal patronage was not necessarily less concerned with outward show. Civic pride and congregational piety can result in costly programs.

Yet the study of the architecture of the world religions is not just a part of social history; it is an important element in understanding the religious traditions themselves. Since cult or worship is at the heart of any faith, and such an activity can only be studied and appreciated fully within its own special setting, it would be an abstraction to concentrate upon texts alone. Moreover, the symbolic function of architectural forms is in itself an additional source of knowledge to be taken into account.

Throughout the ages human beings have found meaning and succor in sacred places enshrined in their religious buildings. In a secularized society there still survives a need for centers of reference, meeting places, and memorials, but they then become associated with national figures and national identity. The Kremlin wall where leaders of the Russian Revolution are buried, together with Lenin's tomb, constitute one such place for Soviet citizens. The Lincoln Memorial in Washington has a spacious chamber containing a seated statue and having the words of the Gettysburg and the Second
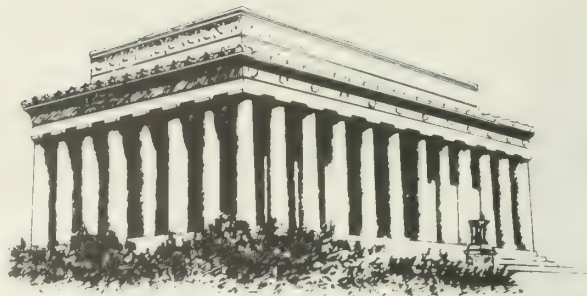
FIGURE 13. *Center of Reference.* Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C.; 1911–1922. The physical image and the inscribed words of President Lincoln give focus to national identity.

Inaugural addresses incised on its walls; both president and texts have important contributions to make to United States identity (see figure 13). The White House in Washington and Buckingham Palace in London are seen as the dwellings of those who have about them a semidivine aura. The birthplaces or museums containing souvenirs (relics) of film and pop stars become centers of pilgrimage. A monument to Egypt's first president, Gamal Abdel Nasser, overlooks the Aswan Dam on the Nile. The former concentration camp at Dachau has become a memorial of the Nazi Holocaust. At the same time temples, cathedrals, mosques, and the like continue to be built: sacred sites, whether overtly religious or not, are a continuing feature of the human scene.

[*For further discussion of individual building types, see* Basilica, Cathedral, and Church; Monastery; Mosque; Portals; Pyramids; Synagogue; Temple; Tombs; *and* Towers. *See also* Biblical Temple *and* Ka'bah. *For discussion of beliefs, practices, and symbols particularly relevant to the relation of religion and architecture, see* Axis Mundi; Circle; Circumambulation; Cities; Labyrinth; Orientation; Pilgrimage; Procession; Relics; Shrines; *and various articles under* Worship and Cultic Life.]

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J. G. DAVIES

ARCTIC RELIGIONS. [*This entry consists of two articles. The overview article presents a general survey of the religious systems of peoples of the circumpolar region. The companion article*, History of Study, *provides a survey of modern scholarship on Arctic religious traditions.*]

An Overview

Arctic religions may be treated together, as constituting a more or less unified entity, for two reasons. First, these religions are practiced by peoples situated in the polar North, who mostly live on the tundra (permanently frozen ground) and partly in the taiga (the northern coniferous forest belt that stretches around the world); like their cultures in general, the religions of these peoples reflect to no little extent the impact of the severe natural environment. [*See* Ecology.] Second, the whole Arctic zone constitutes a marginal area and an archaic residue of the old hunting culture and hunting religion; whereas in the south the waves of Neolithic agriculture and animal husbandry inundated the originally Paleolithic hunting culture, the latter was preserved in the high north, where no cultivation of the ground was possible.

There was also a diffusion of ideas from west to east, and vice versa, within the Arctic area. This diffusion mostly took place in the boreal zone in the Old World, whereas in the New World there was little contact between Arctic groups and their Asian brethren.

Although interior change and later intrusion of world religions (such as Christianity and Buddhism) partly altered the ancient religious structures, their basic foundations and major features persisted until modern times in Siberia and North America. Only the systematic atheistic drive from 1930 onward managed to overthrow the old religions in the Soviet areas.

Ethnic and Cultural Survey. The tribes and peoples of the Arctic culture area belong to several linguistic families. All of them, with the exceptions of some Paleosiberian peoples and the Inuit, are also represented in cultures south of the high Arctic zone. In the following survey, names of peoples will be given as they are authorized today by their respective governments and by the peoples themselves. Their earlier names, used up to the 1930s or later and still popularly used, will be mentioned in parentheses. The main sources of subsistence will also be noted.

1. *The Uralic language family.* In Scandinavia, in Finland, and on the Kola Peninsula, the Arctic tundra and coast and the northern interior woodland are inhabited by the Saami (Lapps). Most of them are fishing people, but in the mountain regions and in parts of the wood-land areas reindeer breeding is a common way of life. East of Lake Onega live the Komi (Zyrians), who are reindeer breeders as well, and the Samoyeds. The latter are divided into two main groups, who move extensively over the tundra with their reindeer herds: the Nentsy (Yuraks), from the Northern Dvina River to the Ural Mountains, and the Nganasani (Tavgi), from the Ob River to Cape Chelyuskin. Along the lower parts of the Ob and Irtysh rivers live two Ugric peoples (related to the Hungarians), the Khanty (Ostiaks) and the Mansi (Voguls), who practice some reindeer breeding but who are mostly fishermen and hunters.

2. *The Tunguz language family.* The wide areas from west of the Yenisei River to the Anadyr River in the east and from the tundra in the north to the Sayan Mountains in the south are the country of the dispersed Tunguz tribes: the Evenki, west of the Lena River, and the Eveny, east of it. Their typical habitat is the taiga, where they subsist as reindeer breeders on a limited scale.

3. *The Turkic language family.* The numerous Yakuts on the Lena River and farther east combine reindeer breeding with horse breeding. Their language is also spoken by the Dolgans in the Taimyr Peninsula area, a group of earlier Tunguz tribes.

4. *The Yukagir.* Now almost extinct, the Yukagir, a group that may be related to the Finno-Ugric peoples, once covered a large area east of the Lena. They were hunters and fishermen until the seventeenth century, when they turned into reindeer-breeding nomads.

5. *The Paleosiberian language family.* The Chukchi, on the Chukchi Peninsula, and the Koriak and the Itelmen (Kamchadal), on the Kamchatka Peninsula, make up the Paleosiberian language family. The inland Chukchi are reindeer breeders; the coastal Chukchi, the Koriak, and the Itelmen are ocean fishermen.

6. *The Inuit.* The Inuit (Eskimo) ultimately may be related to the Paleosiberian peoples. Their territory stretches from the easternmost tip of Asia over the coasts and tundras of Alaska and Canada to Greenland. The Aleut, inhabitants of the Aleutian Islands who are closely related to the Inuit, should also be mentioned here. The Inuit are sea hunters and fishermen and, in northern Alaska and on the barren plains west of the Hudson Bay, caribou hunters.

A very generalized picture of the Arctic culture, conceived as a whole, could be presented as follows. As I have noted, the economy of these peoples was founded on reindeer breeding, hunting, and fishing in the Old World, and only on hunting and fishing in the New World. Wintertime hunting was carried out on skis in the western parts of the area and on snowshoes in east-

CIRCUMPOLAR REGION

This map shows approximate locations of ethnic groups mentioned in this and related articles. No selection of names for a map of this size could truly reflect the religious, ethnic, and linguistic complexity of the area. Moreover, scholars differ on the spellings and applications of names of various peoples.

Atlantic Ocean

BRITISH ISLES

ICELAND

NORTH LAND

SAAMI

GREENLAND

LABRADOR

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Hudson Bay

INUIT

Pacific Ocean

ALEUTIAN ISLANDS

ALEUT

Bering Sea

INUIT

YUIT

Bering Strait

Yukon

ALASKA

Arctic Ocean

North Pole

NEW SIBERIAN ISLANDS

FRANZ JOSEF LAND

NOVAYA ZEMLYA

CHUKCHI

CHUVASH

YUKAGIR

KORIAK

ITELMEN

Kamchatka Pen.

Sea of Okhotsk

EVENY

GILIAK

SAKHALIN ISLANDS

AINU

HOKKAIDO

EVENKI

YAKUTS

SIBERIA

Lena

EVENKI

NGANASANS

DOLGANS

Yenisei

NENTSY

SELKUP

KHANTY

Ob

MANSI

KOMI

Inuit
Aleut
Yukagir
Paleosiberian-speaking Peoples
Tunguz-speaking Peoples
Samoyed-speaking Peoples
Turkic-speaking Peoples
Finno-Ugric-speaking Peoples
Giliak
Ainu
Kettic-speaking Peoples

0   500   1000   2000 km
0   500   1000 miles

ern Siberia and among the woodland Indians of Canada. Sledges (as well as toboggans in the New World) were used for transportation in the winter, and animal-skin boats and occasionally bark canoes in the summer. Animal-skin clothes and fur moccasins constituted the dress. The dwellings were mostly conical skin tents, although more southern groups substituted bark tents in the summer. Round or rectangular semisubterranean houses, sometimes covered with sod, occurred among the river- and coast-dwelling peoples. The social organization was simple in the north, with small, usually bilateral groups. In the south there were clan systems with tendencies toward totemism and more complicated political structures.

Common Religious Elements. Against this harmonious background, it is not surprising that a wide range of religious phenomena are spread out over most of the region, usually as a combined result of ecological and historical factors. The available data bear out Robert H. Lowie's observation that the whole Arctic area constitutes one gigantic entirety from the angle of religious belief. I would here make a certain reservation for the New World Arctic area, however, because both archaeologically and ethnologically the Inuit lack several common circumpolar features, and the same holds for their religion.

The main characteristics of Arctic religions are the special relationships of people to animals and the elaboration of shamanism. While the latter feature probably owes its special appearance to developments among peoples farther south such as the Tunguz and the Yakuts, there is a remarkable emphasis on shamanism, from the Saami in the west to the Inuit in the east, that seems aboriginal. Indeed, it is possible that the strain of the Arctic climate has stimulated strong religious forms of reaction, just as it has provoked the psychic reactions known as Arctic hysteria. No such explanation can be given for the hypertrophic extension of animal ceremonialism. It has its roots, of course, in ancient Eurasian hunting rituals, but its prolific occurrence in the Arctic probably has to do with the necessary dependence on an animal diet in these barren regions.

The spiritual universe. According to the religious beliefs of the Arctic peoples, the whole world is filled with spirits: mountains, trees, and other landmarks have their spirits, and animals have their spirit masters. It is among all these spirits that the shaman finds his supernatural helpers and guardians. However, such man-spirit relationships could also occur among common people, as the evidence shows among the Saami and North American Indians, and there are obvious tendencies in the same direction among the Chukchi, as their "general shamanizing" (that is, when everybody tries to

handle the shamanic drum and fall into ecstasy) testifies. The multifarious world of spirits may have something to do with the fact that the figure of a supreme being is so often diffuse. There is, it seems, a pattern of spiritualism here that defies all more personal expression of higher theistic concepts.

Supreme power. The inclination to conceive the highest supernatural being or beings more as nonpersonal power than personal figure or figures is generally part of Arctic religions and particularly characteristic of the Samoyeds, the Paleosiberian tribes, and the Inuit. The Saami constitute a great exception, but their high-god beliefs have been heavily influenced by Scandinavian and Finnish as well as Christian religious concepts.

A characteristic, somewhat impersonal power concept of the Samoyeds is Num. The word stands for both a deity and the sky. Num is an inclusive concept since it can denote both the highest spirit—the chief spirit or high god—and spirits through which the high god expresses his being, for instance, the spirits of thunder or of the rainbow. Similarly, the Khanty's semipersonal, highest power, Num-Tūrem, makes himself known to man by speaking in the thunder or the storm. The Inuit believe in a rather nebulous supreme being called Sila (or Silap Inua, Hila, etc.), mostly rendered in English as "the lord of the air" (or the weather, or the world). This being is only partly thought of in truly personal terms and, at least among the Central Inuit, it is vested with an uncertain sexual affiliation.

It would seem that the personal character of the supreme being is more apparent among the northern Tunguz and Yakuts. Thus, the highest god of the Evenki, while sometimes represented by the sun, is clearly anthropomorphic.

The vague character of the supreme being of most Arctic groups may to some extent reflect their elementary social organization or the apparent infinity of their tundra world. There is no doubt, however, that this being stands at the apex of the religious pantheon in northern Siberia. The Samoyeds, for instance, think that he lives in heaven, and they sacrifice white reindeer to him on high mountains, particularly in the spring when there is thunder in the air. In northern Siberia there is a close connection between the world pillar and the high god.

In the Arctic area of the Old World, the worldview is dominated by the belief in several heavens over each other and several underworlds under each other, usually seven among the Ugric peoples and nine among the Altaic peoples, such as the Yakuts. Sometimes the sky is portrayed as a tent with holes through which the heavenly light shines down (the holes are the stars). Sometimes the Milky Way is thought of as the backbone

of the sky (a concept shared by North American Indians) or as a river in the landscape of the sky. As among the Tunguz, the world pillar or world tree is believed to penetrate all levels, from the underground to the sky. On the whole, the three-leveled division of the world into a sky world, the earth, and the underworld is a typical Arctic feature.

Other spirits and divinities. Next to the supreme being, the most important spirits of the upper world are the Sun, the Moon, and the thunder spirits. The Sun is often related to the high god (as among the Tunguz), and the Moon can represent the mistress of the dead or, among some Inuit, the mistress of the sea animals (who is herself, secondarily, a mistress of the dead). Among the western Inuit, the moon god rules over the weather (he makes snowstorms) and the animals. [*See* Aningaaq.] The thunder spirits are portrayed as birds, particularly among the eastern Siberian peoples, the Inuit, and the North American Indians. Among the Samoyeds the thunder is supposed to be caused by ducks or by manlike beings, unless it represents the voice of the supreme being.

The surface of the earth is the habitat of a large crowd of spirits—some rule the animal species, some are spirits of the woods, lakes, and mountains (among Eurasian Arctic groups), and some are dangerous ogres, giants, and dwarfs. The Inuit in particular offer a variety of this last class of beings. Of immense importance are the masters of the animals. First, there are the guardians of the species, which are usually represented in the forms of the animals they protect; and second, there is the general lord of the animals, who is mostly conceived in the disguise of the dominant animal, be it the walrus (as among the Chukchi), the pike (as among the Khanty), or the reindeer (as among the Nentsy). In the Inuit area, the mother of the seals and of other water beings, called Sedna or Nuliayuk, is the dominant deity. The walrus mother of the Chukchi is probably related to her. The master or mistress of the animals is a most important divinity to these hunting and fishing peoples, who pray to this being to release the animals or to receive its permission to hunt them. When taboos have been broken, the master of the animals prohibits people from killing them. A primary task of Yukagir and Inuit shamans is to intervene in such cases by visiting the offended spirit and trying to propitiate it.

Such spirits have been thought to reflect a feudal social order. However, similar masters of the animals are found in places where such a social system has not existed, for instance, in North America. They seem to belong to a very ancient heritage.

The mistress of the game may be a variation of the mother-goddess complex. The old Paleolithic mother goddess, a divinity of birth and fertility, has been preserved among these northern peoples, partly as a mistress responsible for the game, partly as a birth goddess. Thus, among the Samoyeds and Ugric peoples she appears as Mother Earth and the birth goddess, among the Yakuts as a birth goddess, and among the Tunguz as the mother of the reindeer and the guardian of home and family. The Tunguz, and possibly also the Chukchi, know her also as a spirit of fire who protects the tent and its inhabitants, that is, the family. She then receives meat offerings in the fire. In some cases, as among the Saami, the tasks of the mother goddess are divided between several female divinities. Throughout the Eurasian Arctic, the mother goddesses have connections with the door of dwellings and are supposed to live under the ground. The Inuit have no particular birth goddess, but Sedna, the mistress of the sea animals, is in her unclean states a prototype of the woman who is ritually unclean, particularly when pregnant or giving birth. The birth goddess is primarily the protectress of women, and in some tribes female spirits are inherited from mother to daughter.

Cultic Practices. Characteristic of the cultic complexes among Arctic peoples is the simple development of ritual forms and the use of cultic objects—such as crude sculptures in wood and peculiarly formed stones—as symbolic receivers of offerings. The relationships between the sacrificers and these objects varies from veneration to coercive magic.

Sacrifices. Throughout the Arctic the supernatural powers have received offerings of some sort. Sacrifices are particularly important in Eurasia, whereas the Inuit have been less indulgent in this practice. In some dangerous places the Inuit offer pieces of blubber or flesh to the residing powers. Presents decorating sacred stones are supposed to give good hunting. However, the Inuit resort a good deal to magic—to spells, talismans, and amulets—to attain the same results. In the Arctic Old World, on the other hand, there is more religious supplication in ritual attitudes.

The most common offerings in northern Eurasia are simple pieces of tobacco and meat and, on more important occasions, the sacrifices of whole reindeer. The Saami, for instance, made offerings of tobacco to ensure good fishing when passing sacred rocks in a boat and of reindeer to the gods and local spiritual rulers when particular reasons demanded so. Such reasons could be the occurrence of a disease, the spread of a reindeer pestilence, the wish for the increase of the reindeer herds, and so on. The Samoyeds and other Arctic peoples of Siberia also evince these various attitudes to sacrifices,

except that they also slaughter dogs. Both the Saami and the Samoyeds also consecrate animals to spiritual powers without killing them. Both tie a picture of the master of the fishes to the sacrifice given to this spirit. The northern Tunguz regularly perform sacrifices for the different masters of the animals.

The shaman often acts as the ceremonial leader, or sacrificial priest, at the larger offerings, particularly when his peculiar knowledge of the spirits is needed for the correct conduct of the ceremonies. Some ritual occasions are great annual ceremonies in which the shaman has a central function. To this category belongs the Samoyed ceremony held at the return of the sun after the polar winter night. It includes dancing (by shaman and common people alike), healing, and divination. Another such ceremony occurs among the Tunguz and is concerned with the revivification of nature in the spring, the growth and increase of the animals, and luck with future hunting. This ceremony is also connected with general shamanizing and the installment of new shamans.

Cultic images. The stone cult is prominent everywhere. Among the Saami, strangely formed stones, called *seite*, are connected with spirits that control the animals in the vicinity or the fish in water where the stone stands. The Samoyeds make offerings to similar stone gods, as do the Khanty, the Mansi, the Tunguz, and the Inuit. In some reports the stones seem, at least momentarily, identical with the spirits, but otherwise the general idea is that the stone represents the spirit or serves as its abode. The stone cult is a very important feature of Saami religion. The Saami, like the Samoyeds, the Khanty, and the Mansi, smeared the mouths of the stone idols with blood from the reindeer sacrificed to them.

The same form of offering occurs among the Tunguz and the Yakuts in their cult of the master of the forests. This spirit is represented by a carved human figure on the trunk of a living tree. Other northern peoples, such as the Saami, have made similar carvings on trees to symbolize spirits.

The most common custom, however, was to make crude wooden sculptures of the spirits. Such spirit figures occur all the way from Lapland to Alaska. Throughout northern Eurasia they are surprisingly similar—pointed at the top, usually without limbs, and occasionally decorated with cross marks on the body. The Khanty and the Samoyeds dress up these spirit images. Some wooden idols are set outside, often in groups at the same place; others are occasionally stationed outside but are mostly kept in the sacred corner of the house or tent.

Wooden figures also occur in Siberian shamanism among the Tunguz and the Dolgans. For these peoples, the figures symbolize the shaman's helping spirits and the world pole or world tree. A line of seven or nine pillars represents the lower sky worlds, where the shaman's soul or guardian spirit rests on the way to heaven. These images are often used for just one shamanic séance and are then discarded.

Animal ceremonialism. Much of the cultic life centers on animal ceremonialism, that is, the rituals accorded the slain game. Several animal species are shown a ceremonial courtesy after hunting; for example, their bones are buried in anatomical order. All over the area, a special complex of rites surrounds the treatment of the dead bear.

Particular attention is given to the way in which the bear's body is brought home. It is carried in procession, often with patches on its eyes so it cannot see its slayers and take revenge on them. It is brought into the tent through a sacred entrance at the back. Such sacred doors or openings occur in dwellings throughout northern Eurasia. A festive meal is arranged, and the men who have killed the bear assure it of their innocence and blame others. The bear is admonished to observe the respect and kindness with which it is treated and to tell the bears in the world of the spirits about this treatment so that more bears will allow themselves to be slain. Afterward, the bones of the bear are carefully buried and its skull is placed in a tree or on a pole. The aims of the ceremony are obviously to persuade more animals of the same species to be killed. The size and ferocity of the bear probably induced its traditionally special treatment. [*See* Bears.]

Paleosiberian peoples and Alaska Inuit paid similar attention to the whale. The Inuit celebrated the dead whale ritually for five days, a period corresponding to the mourning period for a dead person. The Alaska Inuit also had a bladder festival in December, at which the bladders of the seals that had been slain during the year were restored to the sea. The Inuit, like the Finno-Ugric peoples, make a clear distinction between what belongs to land and what belongs to water: the bones of land animals are deposited in or on the earth; the bones and bladders of fish and sea animals are put in the water.

Ceremonies are held not only for food-giving animals but also for animals that are feared. The Koriak feast the slain wolf and dance in its honor, at the same time asking the supreme being not to make the wolf angry. A reindeer sacrifice to the same god is a humble appeal to him not to send wolves into the reindeer herds.

The persistent concern with animals and hunting is reflected in the host of hunting taboos, and in rock

drawings that have "life lines" drawn between the mouths and the hearts of the depicted animals, possibly suggesting the animals' souls.

Shamanism and soul beliefs. Since the shamanism of the Arctic peoples is discussed elsewhere, only a few critical remarks will be made here. [See Shamanism, *overview article and article on* Siberian and Inner Asian Shamanism.] It seems that the extreme development of shamanistic ritual farther to the south in Siberia is somewhat attenuated in the northern Arctic. On the other hand, in the Arctic the intensity of the shaman's ecstatic trance is certainly not weaker, but is in fact stronger, than it is in Siberia. North and south are also remarkably different in regard to the conception of the soul basic to shamanism. As always where true shamanism operates, there is a dualism between the free soul that acts during dream and trance and that represents man in an extracorporeal form and the one or several body souls that keep man alive and conscious during his waking hours. It is typically the shaman's free soul that, in a trance, tries to rescue a sick man's soul (of either type), which has left its body and gone to the land of the dead and possibly reached this place. This is indeed the conception of the soul and disease among the Arctic peoples. However, among the more southerly Tunguz and Yakuts, the soul types are more intricate, and the soul sent out by the shaman is commonly a body soul. Therein lies the obvious and basic difference between Arctic and other Siberian peoples.

There are other differences as well. The idea of the shaman being possessed during his trance is well developed in southern Siberia and the American Northwest Coast culture, but it is not so frequent among the Arctic peoples. On the other hand, Shaking Tent ceremonies, in which the shaman is tied up and covered by blankets, calls upon his spirits for information, and then frees himself from his bonds, can be found among the Samoyeds, the Yakuts, and the Inuit (and northern Algonquians in North America). Iconographic representations of what seem to be double-headed assistant spirits occur all over the Arctic. Divination by lifting weights is common among the Saami, the Tunguz, and the Inuit, and divination by scapulimancy has been recorded in northern Siberia, in China, and among the Algonquian-speaking Indians of northeastern North America. It is less certain that the chief guardian spirit of the Yakuts and Dolgans, the animal mother, is derived from northern influences. Other items of possibly Arctic and ultimately Paleolithic origins such as the shaman's drum (and the drawings on it) are hardly conducive to more secure conclusions.

Afterlife. Unlike most other hunting peoples, the peoples in the North generally believe that the realm of the dead is situated in the underworld. The Khanty think that the world of shades extends close to the mouth of the Ob River; it is characterized by cold, eternal darkness, hunger, and silence. The Tunguz view of the underworld is more optimistic. The people there live in birchbark tents, hunt, fish, and tend to their reindeer in the woods. The Central and Eastern Inuit realm of the dead is identical with Sedna's place at the bottom of the sea. It is not bright, but endurable. The rule in most places is that only those who have suffered a violent death go to heaven; among the Chukchi and Inuit these fortunate beings make their appearance in the aurora borealis. Often, the underworld is conceived to be contrary to our world in every respect; for instance, while it is night in the underworld it is day on earth.

There are traces of evidence among the Paleosiberian peoples that they once believed in two lands of the dead, one underground and the other in heaven or at the horizon. Such pieces of information may be interpreted as testimony of a conception of afterlife that was originally more sky-oriented, overlayered by later influences from the south.

Myths. Several myths and legends have a remarkable distribution along the Arctic coast, such as those of the "bear wife" and "the resuscitation of the animal with the missing member." Many myths of more southerly origin have been integrated with local mythological patterns, such as the myths of the "earth diver" and the Flood. Quite a few tales are star myths, legends of the first shamans, or narratives of supernatural animals. A widely distributed myth tells about the cosmic stag, or elk, represented in the night sky as the Great Bear. He steals the sun but is deprived of it by a hare who restores the heavenly light to mankind. Among the Tunguz, this tale is connected with the spring ceremonies described above.

The Paleosiberian peoples share with North American Indians the idea of a culture hero and trickster. His name is Raven, or Big Raven among the Northwest Indians, and he appears as man or as a bird. Among the Koriak, Big Raven formed the earth, brought light to it, and created all the animals. He is man's ancestor and the first shaman. He is the most prominent divinity (although there is a vague, otiose sky god, identical with dawn, who also represents the universe). At the same time Big Raven is a most obscene trickster, and he dominates mythology.

History of Arctic Religions. Because of the absence of reliable written sources, not much is known of the religious developments in the Arctic. However, certain clues can be obtained through the study of the ethnic history of the area (Soviet scholars call this history "ethnogenesis").

As stated before, the cultures of the Arctic area are remnants of a Paleolithic hunting culture at the northern fringe of three continents. They preserve hunting customs and religious ideas that have disappeared or become transformed in the southern pastoral and agricultural societies. The Finno-Ugric peoples and the Paleosiberian peoples have best preserved their archaic heritage. The Inuit represent a later cultural phase with roots in the circum-Pacific fishing cultures. Their original connections to the Old World are reflected in the way animals are depicted in their art, ultimately inspired by Eurasian steppe art some two to three thousand years ago. The Inuit belong ecologically, but only in part historically, to the Arctic hunting culture. They therefore deviate considerably from the other Arctic peoples in their religious structure. On the other hand, the Pacific fishing culture has had an important impact on Paleosiberian culture and religion.

At the other end of the Arctic, the Saami were heavily influenced by their Scandinavian neighbors, first through old Nordic religion, later by Christianity. Reindeer-breeding nomadism developed in Christian times and has not palpably changed Saami religion.

In the Siberian Arctic, changes were brought about by influences from the south. First, both material culture and religion were affected by cultural waves from the Near East and China; the subterranean location of the realm of the dead may partly be a result of this impact. Second, with the move of the Tunguz and Yakuts toward the north, a major cultural shift took place in the Arctic. The Tunguz, coming from the Baikal area, slowly supplanted or incorporated Paleosiberian tribes, such as the Yukagir. They were probably the main instigators of the diffusion of reindeer breeding (reindeer-breeding nomadism with large herds apparently did not develop until the eighteenth century). The introduction of reindeer breeding in the Arctic did not change traditional religions palpably, but some new spirits, such as the master of the tame reindeer, were incorporated. The continued dependence on hunting and fishing may have impeded the development of a purely nomadic religion. On the other hand, the Tunguz peoples were probably instrumental in spreading the intense form of shamanism in the north, a form that had been influenced by Buddhist ideas and Tibetan ecstatic practices.

This southern influence was strengthened with the arrival of the horse-tending Yakuts from Mongolia during the medieval centuries. The Yakuts who followed the Lena Valley to the north replaced some of the dispersed Tunguz groups and partly absorbed the original population. The Tunguz and Yakut influx created in the north what has been called "the Siberian gap," a void between the more ancient Finno-Ugric cultures in the west and the Paleosiberian cultures in the east. This void is easily observable in the religious context where Tunguz and Yakut thought and practice represent more complex and developed forms.

[*For discussion of specific Arctic traditions, see* Inuit Religion; Saami Religion; *and* Samoyed Religion.]

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<div align="right">ÅKE HULTKRANTZ</div>

History of Study

Arctic religions have been explored by scholars from many countries, though primarily from the countries where these religions are practiced: Denmark (the Inuit of Greenland); Norway, Sweden, and Finland (the Saami); the Soviet Union (the northern Eurasian peoples); and the United States and Canada (the Inuit and northernmost American Indians). This has meant that several research traditions and research premises have been involved. For a long time the study of Arctic religions was a subordinated part of the ethnographic research on peoples and cultures, and in many places, particularly in the Soviet Union, it still is. Until the end of the last century, descriptions of Arctic religions were encapsulated in travel reports and tribal monographs, but since that time particular issues of Arctic religions, such as shamanism, have been debated. However, conscious attention to connections between various Arctic religions was missing from scholarship until the beginning of this century.

The Development of Circumpolar Studies. The exploration of Siberian and Canadian Arctic cultures at the turn of the century made scholars aware of their great similarities. Since this was the time when geographic environmentalism swayed high—and the Arctic is known for its extreme climate—Arctic cultures were readily given an environmentalist interpretation. The pioneer of this approach, Artur Byhan, author of the classic *Die Polarvölker* (1909), brought together pertinent religious materials from all over the Arctic and referred many religious manifestations to the pressures and inspiration of the Arctic environment. He certainly did not make a real analysis of the mechanisms implied, but he presented cultural and religious data in their environmental context.

Other scholars followed suit. In the writings of Waldemar Bogoraz, M. A. Czaplicka, Kai Birket-Smith, Daryll Forde, and Åke Ohlmarks, different shades of an environmentalist interpretation of Arctic religions are represented. In a modified, ecological form, I have substantiated the environmental impact on these religions. [*See* Ecology.]

Most ethnologists and anthropologists, however, have favored a cultural-historical analysis in which all the Arctic cultures belong together, either as a common field of diffusion or as an archaic residue. This approach originated with the American anthropologist Franz Boas, who compared Paleosiberian and Northwest American Indian mythologies. His speculations resulted in the assumption of a direct communication between North America and North Asia. This perspective was expanded by Austrian and Danish diffusionists.

Wilhelm Schmidt, the dominating figure of the so-called Vienna culture-circle school, accepted the idea of an Arctic "primeval culture" *(Urkultur)* that, although somewhat faded, has been preserved to some extent among Samoyeds, Koriak, and Caribou Inuit. Schmidt also found shared religious elements among some North American "primeval peoples" *(Urvölker)* and the Arctic peoples, such as the "earth-diver" myth, the association of the high god with the rainbow, the dualism between thunder spirits and water spirits, and the sacred fire. He therefore postulated the existence of a continuous Arctic–North American primeval culture in which religious ideas and customs were formed in the same mold.

While Schmidt's general scheme of historical developments has been discredited, his reconstruction of an Arctic cultural and religious area rests on solid ground. The research of Danish ethnologists, in particular Gudmund Hatt and Kai Birket-Smith, revealed an interconnection between all Arctic cultures in a circumpolar round. Hatt has shown distributions of myths and folk tales over, primarily, the Siberian and North American Arctic regions. Robert H. Lowie, Francis Lee Utley, and I have suggested historical connections in the religious and mythological field, some of them joining the Saami with the inhabitants of northernmost North America. Archaeologists have also contributed to the investigations of the spreading of religious ideas in the Arctic zone: Gutorm Gjessing, for instance, has illuminated the Arctic rock-drawing panels by comparing eastern and western Arctic traits (such as the so-called life line).

All these historical investigations have followed the diffusionist approach. Very little has been done along the other line of historical approach, the study of common heritage. A. Irving Hallowell has, certainly, suggested the possibility that bear ceremonialism originated within the larger Eurasian Paleolithic hunting culture. Its circumpolar distribution would thus, at least partly, be a leftover from a once more extended context. Indeed, not only the Arctic but also all North and South American hunting cultures show evidence of their status as remnants of this old basic culture, as Boas and, in particular, Erland Nordenskiöld demonstrated. As observed by Mircea Eliade, the outlines of

one and the same shamanistic complex are found from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego. Everyone who compares Mapuche shamanism in Chile with Siberian shamanism will notice obvious parallels. Seen in this perspective American hunting religions are an extension of Arctic religions.

Some scholars have tried to discern major changes in the development of Arctic religions. If I exclude earlier evolutionist theories, this discussion has been connected with the interpretation of animal ceremonialism and shamanism. The ceremonies associated with the bones of the slain animals have mostly been identified as burial and rejuvenation rites. Some authors, however, have expressed other opinions. For example, Alexander Gahs and Wilhelm Schmidt have interpreted these bone rites as offerings (*Primitialopfer*) to the supreme being or to his manifestations in other supernatural beings, such as the master of the animals. Although this opinion is not shared by other scholars, there is no doubt that some animal rituals, namely those associated with the reindeer, have a clear sacrificial character among the Samoyeds, the Tunguz, and the Koriak; the Tunguz, for instance, make reindeer sacrifices to the spirits of the woods. Karl Meuli, therefore, considered that a change had taken place from the animal ceremonialism of the hunting culture to the sacrificial ideology of reindeer-breeding nomadism; the animal, surrounded by revivification rites, was transformed into a sacrifice to the powers. At the same time, bear ceremonialism lingered on and had a firm grip in all nomadic cultures of the North, as shown by Hans-Joachim Paproth's investigations.

Particular Areal Studies. Most authors have concentrated their efforts on the study of subfields or tribes within the Arctic area. They have, from their particular points of departure, often reached conclusions that refer to the whole circumpolar zone or large parts thereof; but their real intentions have mostly been to reveal the religious systems or specific traits of these systems. It is possible to distinguish three main Arctic regions of exploration, usually (but not always) treated as separate from each other. They will be called here the Saami field, the northern Eurasian field, and the Inuit field.

The Saami field. The scientific analyses of Saami religion on the basis of older sources (there were few vestiges left in the nineteenth century besides folkloric materials) began late in the nineteenth century. This was the time when such scholars as J. A. Friis, Gustaf von Düben, Johan Fritzner, and others began to systematize Saami religious ideas. The interest in the possible contributions that Saami religion could make to our understanding of Scandinavian religion, a perspective introduced by Fritzner, was later continued by such men as

Axel Olrik, Kaarle Krohn, and Wolf von Unwerth. The underlying idea was that Saami religion was inspired to a large extent by Scandinavian thought and retained Old Scandinavian religious features. In the 1920s the pendulum swung, and Saami religion began to be considered in the light of Finno-Ugric and Arctic religious ideas and cults. Uno Holmberg (later Harva) and Björn Collinder guided this new perspective. Since then a host of writers, including Ernst Manker, Ernst Emsheimer, Gustav Ränk, T. I. Itkonen, Olof Pettersson, Hans Mebius, Nils Storå, and Louise Bäckman, have tried to coordinate Saami religion with other Arctic and northern Eurasian religions.

The northern Eurasian field. The first accounts of the "primitive" peoples of the Russian empire and their religious customs date from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. More systematic studies were undertaken in the nineteenth century when the Finnish-speaking peoples were investigated by Mathias Alexander Castrén; the Mansi by Bernhardt Munkácsi; the Samoyeds by Castrén, Otto Finsch, and V. V. Radlov; the Yakuts by W. L. Sieroszewski and Radlov; and the Eveny (an eastern Tunguz tribe) by Leopold von Schrenk. These accounts are all classic and still authoritative. The only treatises that compared aspects of various cultures dealt with the bear ceremonial complex (N. M. Yadrintzeff) and shamanism.

The beginning of the twentieth century saw the continued publication of tribal monographs. Waldemar Bogoraz and Waldemar Jochelson, respectively, published excellent studies of the Chukchi and Koriak that contain important chapters on religious life. Jochelson also wrote a book on what was preserved of Yukagir religion. In the same way, Leo Sternberg advanced our knowledge of the religious customs of the Amur and Sakhalin tribes. Finnish scholars continued the interest in Arctic peoples that had started with Castrén: Toivo Lehtisalo and Kai Donner visited the Samoyeds and K. F. Karjalainen visited the Khanty (Ostiaks).

During the postrevolutionary era, Soviet scholars have made several tribal ethnographic investigations of considerable importance, although one-sidedly Marxist and evolutionist in outlook. Religious issues, shamanism in particular, have been discussed from this programmatic point of view. Unfortunately, few works have been translated into Western languages. Among the more prominent contributors to the study of religious themes are N. A. Alekseev (on the Yakuts), A. F. Anisimov (on the Tunguz), A. A. Popov (on the Samoyeds and Yakuts), E. D. Prokof'eva (on the Samoyeds), and G. M. Vasilevich (on the Tunguz).

If shamanism is excluded, Soviet authors may be generally said to have neglected comparative studies of re-

ligion. There are some papers on such topics as mother-goddess worship and totemism, and Dimitri K. Zelenin's book-length work on *ongons*, that is, idols that portray animals or human beings, is a major comparative treatise. These investigations, however, are exceptions. I. S. Gurvich comments on the paucity of Soviet papers in this genre in an article (1979) on ethnographic parallels in the Arctic.

The basic surveys of Finno-Ugric and northern Siberian religions have been composed by non-Russian scholars, such as M. A. Czaplicka, Uno Holmberg Harva, Wilhelm Schmidt, Ivar Paulson, and Gustav Ränk. Other comparative studies have been written by Adolf Friedrich (on beliefs about bones and skeletons), Alexander Gahs (on bones as offerings), Eveline Lot-Falck (on hunting rituals), Josef Haekel (on the cult of idols and totemism), Gustav Ränk (on the house and family cults), Ivar Paulson (on concepts of the soul, masters of the animals, bone rites, and house idols), Horst Nachtigall (on burial customs), and Ivan A. Lopatin (on cult of the dead). The Soviet papers previously referred to should also be mentioned: Zelenin's study of idols, A. M. Zolotarev's writings on totemism, and Anisimov's discussion of cosmology.

The particular religious connections between northern Siberian and North American Arctic and Northwest Coast cultures were illuminated at the turn of the century by the Jesup Expedition, sponsored by the American Museum of Natural History in New York, with Boas as the director and Bogoraz and Jochelson as Russian members. This intercontinental ethnological problem, which included the question of religio-historical relations, received less attention among Russian scholars after the Russian Revolution of 1917.

The Inuit field. The Danes had already secured important information on the Greenland Inuit in the eighteenth century. Danish scholarship in the field started in the nineteenth century when Gustav Holm and H. Rink described, in particular, the East Greenland Inuit religion. At the other end of the Inuit area, in southern Alaska (at that time part of the Russian empire), the Finn H. J. Holmberg noted down Inuit and Indian religious ideas about the same time. Toward the end of the century, American anthropological research entered the scene with Franz Boas, who wrote a monograph on the Central Inuit, and A. L. Kroeber, who described the Inuit of Smith Sound.

The twentieth century has seen a rich scholarship on Inuit religion, most of it directed from Copenhagen. Knud Rasmussen covered the whole Inuit area with his insightful analyses of Inuit religious thinking, but first of all the Greenland, Central, and Polar Inuit. William Thalbitzer wrote on beliefs, myths, and cults of the

Greenlanders, Erik Holtved on the Polar Inuit, and Kai Birket-Smith on the Caribou Inuit and the Chugach of Alaska. Among American scholars, Diamond Jenness, who has described the Copper Inuit, and Margaret Lantis, who has analyzed the ceremonialism of the Alaska Inuit, have been prominent. As pointed out before, the Danish scholars have been occupied with investigating circumpolar trait diffusions, using the Inuit traits as their point of departure.

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There is no similar survey of scholarly contributions in tsarist and Soviet Russia, except the studies of shamanism. Some points of view on Soviet studies are presented in I. S. Gurvich's "An Ethnographic Study of Cultural Parallels among the Aboriginal Populations of Northern Asia and Northern North America," *Arctic Anthropology* 16 (1979): 32–38. The comprehensive areal works by Uno Holmberg Harva and Ivar Paulson contain some introductory remarks, but no more. The student has to go to the separate books and articles, most of them published in Russian, but some in western European languages: this applies, of course, first of all to the works of scholars residing in western Europe and America. No collocation of all this scholarship has ever been done.

The same applies to the split publications on Inuit religion. The total research contribution has not yet been evaluated. See, however, the short introduction to the subject by Ivar Paulson, Karl Jettmar, and me in *Les religions arctiques et finnoises* (Paris, 1965), pp. 346f.

ÅKE HULTKRANTZ

ARHAT. The Sanskrit term *arhat* (Pali, *arahant*) derives from the root *arh (arhati)* and literally means "worthy" or "deserving." The term is especially important in Theravāda Buddhism, where it denotes the highest state of spiritual development, but it also has pre-Buddhist and non-Buddhist applications.

History and Development of the Term. In Vedic and non-Vedic contexts, the noun *arhat* and the verb *arhati* applied generally to persons or gods whose particular status earned for them the characterization of "worthy" or "deserving of merit." The terms also denoted "being able to do," or "being capable of doing." For example, in *Rgveda* 1.94.1 Agni is addressed in a song of praise as "the worthy one" *(arhat)*. The term *arhat* does not appear in the Upaniṣads, but the verb *arhati* occurs there five times with the sense of "being able." The ten occurrences of the verb in the *Bhagavadgītā* convey a similar general meaning.

In the Jain *sūtra*s the term is often used in a sense closer to that found in Buddhist writings. Here the *arhat* is described as one who is free from desire, hatred, and delusion, who knows everything, and who is endowed with miraculous powers. While these characterizations are consistent with the Buddhist use of the term, it should be noted that the Jains applied the word exclusively to the *tīrthaṃkara*s or revealers of religion, whereas in Buddhism arhatship is an ideal to be attained by all serious religious strivers, especially monks and nuns. [*See* Tīrthaṃkaras.]

In the Pali scriptures of Theravāda Buddhism *arahant/arahati* shares with Vedic, Hindu, and Jain sources the same general meanings "worthy, able, fit." In a more specific usage, but one that is not yet part of the most prevalent formulas found in the Sutta and Vinaya Piṭakas, the term is applied to those who have supernatural powers or who practice austerities.

Place in Buddhist Soteriology. In its most typical usage in Theravāda Buddhism, however, the term *arahant* signifies persons who have reached the goal of enlightenment or *nibbāna* (Skt., *nirvāṇa*). In the Pali canon the *arahant* emerges not simply as the revealer of the religion or the person worthy of receiving gifts but as one who has attained freedom of mind and heart, has overcome desire and passion, has come to true knowledge and insight, has crossed over the flood (of *saṃsāra*)

and gone beyond *(pāragata)*, has destroyed the *āsava*s (deadly attachments to the world), is versed in the threefold knowledge *(tevijja)* of past, present, and future, has achieved the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment, and who has attained *nibbāna*.

In the Vinaya, the concept of the *arahant* appears to be connected with the concept of *uttarimanussa* ("further being, superhuman being"). Here, the *arahant* is said to possess one or more of the four trance states *(jhāna)*, one or more of the four stages of sanctification, mastery of the threefold knowledge and the sixfold knowledge *(chaḷabhiññā)*, which includes knowledge of previous rebirths, and to have achieved the destruction of the *āsava*s, or "cankers." Indeed, it may be that the notion of *uttarimanussa* constitutes the earliest beginning of a more elaborated and refined concept designated by the term *arahant*.

It is in the Nikāyas, however, that the concept of the *arahant* achieves its mature form. In the first volume of the *Dīgha Nikāya* ten of the thirteen *sutta*s deal almost entirely with this theme; the other three are indirectly related to it. In these texts arhatship is extolled as the highest of social ranks, the only form of sacrifice worth making, the best asceticism, and the true form of *brahmacariya* (Skt., *brahmacarya*). Clearly, the term *arahant* signifies the Buddhist transvaluation of terms applied to the most worthwhile aspects of life. In the *Majjhima Nikāya* the *arahant* is said to recognize things as they really are, to have eliminated the *āsava*s, to be far removed from evil, and to be beyond birth, decay, and death.

There are several *arahant* formulas in the Pali Tipiṭaka. Perhaps the best known is the following:

Rebirth has been destroyed. The higher life has been fulfilled. What had to be done has been accomplished. After this present life there will be no beyond.

(*Dīgha Nikāya* 1.84 and elsewhere)

Other formulas emphasize the attainment of the emancipation of mind, the transcendence of rebirth, the realization of jhanic states, knowledge of the Four Truths, the overcoming of the *āsava*s, and the gaining of salvation and perfect knowledge. The term also appears in the formulaic phrase characterizing the Buddha: "A Tathāgata arises in the world, an *arahant*, a fully enlightened one perfect in knowledge and conduct, a wellfarer, a world-knower, unsurpassed driver of men to be driven, a teacher of *deva*s [gods] and mankind, A Buddha, an Exalted One."

Arhatship figures prominently into the Theravāda notion that the salvific journey is a gradual path *(magga)* in which one moves from the condition of ordinary worldly attachments governed by ignorant sense

desires to a state of liberation characterized by utter equanimity and the knowledge of things as they are. As Buddhagosa put it in his *Visuddhimagga* (Path of Purification), the classic synopsis of Theravāda doctrine, the *arahant* has completed all of the purities derived through the observance of the moral precepts, *(sīla)*, meditational practice *(jhāna)*, and the purity of knowledge *(paññā-visuddhi)*. The *sine qua non* of this path is meditation, which leads to extraordinary cognitive states and stages of consciousness *(jhāna)* and, allegedly, to the acquisition of various supernormal "powers" *(iddhi)*. These attainments became fundamental to the cult of saints, an important aspect of popular Theravāda Buddhist practice. This popular aspect of arhatship has not always been easy to reconcile with the classical notion, which emphasizes the acquisition of what Buddhagosa refers to as the "analytical knowledges," for example, the analysis of reality in terms of its conditioned and co-arising nature *(paṭicca-samuppāda;* Skt., *pratītya-samutpāda)*.

In the classical formula of the four stages of sanctification one becomes an *arahant* after first passing through three preceeding stages: "stream-enterer" *(sotāpanna;* Skt., *srotāpanna),* "once-returner" *(sakadāgāmin;* Skt., *sakṛdāgāmin),* and "never-returner" *(anāgāmin)*. These stages are described in terms of a karmic/cosmic pattern of rebirth in which the *arahant* transcends all states within *saṃsāra* (the cycle of life and death). In the *Milindapañha* (Questions of King Milinda) only the self-enlightened Buddhas *(paccekabuddha)* and the completed Buddhas *(sammāsambuddha)* are designated as higher stages of attainment; but these are so rare that the *arahant* is held up as the goal of the renunciant life.

Both the Theravāda *Kathāvatthu* (Points of Controversy) and Vasumitra's *Samayabhedoparacanacakra* (History of the Schisms, a Sarvāstivāda work) give ample evidence that during the first few centuries following the death of the Buddha there were frequent disputes within the order concerning the nature and attributes of the *arhat.* The greatest challenge to the *arhat* ideal, however, came from the Mahāyāna tradition, which proclaimed the career of the *bodhisattva* to be superior to that of the *arhat.* Texts such as the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* and *Vimalakīrti Sūtras* criticize the *arhat* for pursuing, in their view, an unacceptably self-centered soteriological path.

The Arhat as Cult Figure. In popular Buddhism the *arhat* has become a figure endowed with magical and apotropaic powers. In Burma, the *arahant* Shin Thiwali (Pali, Sivali), declared by the Buddha to be the foremost recipient of gifts among his disciples, is believed to

bring prosperity and good fortune to those who petition him. The *arahant* Upagupta, who tamed Māra and converted him to Buddhism, is thought to have the power to prevent storms and floods as well as other kinds of physical violence and unwanted chaos. Customarily, Buddhist festivals in Burma and northern Thailand are initiated by an offering to Upagupta in order to guarantee the success of the event. In Burma, offerings are made to the Buddha and the eight *arahant*s (Sāriputta, Moggallāna, Ānanda, Revata, Upāli, Koṇḍañña, Rāhula, and Gavampati) as part of a long-life engendering ceremony in which each *arahant* is associated with one of the eight days of the Burmese week and with a special planet. Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja, one of the sixteen great *arhat*s (Chin., *lo-han*), was particularly venerated as the guardian saint of monasteries' refectories in China and Japan (where he is known as Binzuru), and was also worshiped as a popular healing saint.

The *arhat,* as one who has realized the *summum bonum* of the spiritual path, is worshiped on the popular level as a field of merit *(puṇy akṣetra)* and source of magical, protective power. Some, such as Upagupta and Piṇḍola, became in effect protective deities believed to have the power to prevent violence and illness. Offerings to their images or symbolic representations of their presence constitute cultic practice in both domestic and public rituals. However, *arhat*s other than those associated with the Buddha during his lifetime or the sixteen *arhat*s enumerated in Nandimitra's *Record of the Abiding of the Dharma* (T.D. no. 2030) have served as sources of power. Claims of arhatship are continuously being made on behalf of holy monks in countries like Sri Lanka, Burma, and Thailand. Devoted laypersons seek them out for boons and wear protective amulets bearing their image or charred remains of their hair or robe. They may be venerated as wizards (Burm., *weikza*) with magical skills in alchemy, trance, and the like. Elaborate hagiographies tell of extraordinary natural signs announcing their birth and detail careers characterized by the performance of miraculous deeds. Their monasteries, in turn, may become holy pilgrimage centers both during and after their lifetime.

In short, the *arhat* embodies one of the fundamental tensions in the Buddhist tradition between the ideal of enlightenment and equanimity and the extraordinary magical power concomitant with this attainment. This tension, while present in the texts, is further heightened in the light of popular Buddhist attitudes and practices regarding the figure of the *arhat.*

[*For further discussion of the notion of the* arhat *in Buddhist soteriology, see* Soteriology, *article on* Buddhist Soteriology, *and* Nirvāṇa. *The career of the* arhat

is contrasted with that of other religious figures in Bo-
dhisattva Path *and in* Mahāsiddhas. *For a cross-cultural
perspective, see also* Perfectibility.]

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DONALD K. SWEARER

ARIANISM is the heretical doctrine promulgated by
the Christian Alexandrian priest Arius (c. 250–336) that
asserted the radical primacy of the Father over the Son.
[*See the biography of Arius.*] Three distinct streams of
influence merged in the sea of doctrinal upheaval of
Christianity in the fourth century: (1) the theological
system developed by Arius himself, which was his pri-
vate and pastoral accomplishment; (2) the moderate
and conservative Origenism of the majority of Eastern
bishops who found themselves in consonance with Ar-
ius's own Origenian background; and (3) the political
initiatives of these bishops against Alexander of Alex-
andria. The complex state of church affairs arising from
the confluence of these three streams has become known
as the Arian controversy.

Without Arius the controversy would never have ex-
isted. Paradoxically, however, the Alexandrian priest
contributed more to the name of the crisis than to the
shaping of its doctrinal issues. In Arius's thought, cer-
tain trends of Alexandrian theology, formulated by Ori-
gen a few generations earlier, reached their ultimate
consequences. Arius's concept of the Christian godhead
was monarchic, that is, it held that the first and unique
absolute principle of divinity is the Father. Conse-
quently, any other divine reality was considered by him

as secondary to the Father. He applied this view first of
all to the Logos, the Word of God, the Son who becomes
the instrument of the divine plan of creation and salva-
tion. The Son, being bound to the decision of the Father
in the very process of his own generation as the Son, is
not eternal in the same sense as the Father is eternal;
more important, he is not eternal because only the Fa-
ther is ungenerated. On the other hand, being the in-
strument of the fulfillment of the Father's will, the Son
is by nature linked with the divine creation. He is, so to
speak, the first transcendent creature, the principle of
all things. Arius developed several Origenian insights in
a way that led him finally to contradict Origen's notion
of the godhead. In the course of his systematic inquiry,
he not only urges traditional forms of trinitarian sub-
ordinationism, he pleads also for a radical dissimilarity
among the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

It is not easy to garner an authentic picture of Arius's
teachings on the incarnation of the Word and his inter-
pretation of the gospel narratives. His main opponents,
Alexander of Alexandria and Athanasius, have transmit-
ted no direct evidence from Arius on these points; we
must deduce Arius's conceptions from what his oppo-
nents denounce and refute in their anti-Arian writings.
Arius's teachings on incarnation were probably tradi-
tional and reflective of Origen's christological legacy.
Arius, like Origen, advocated that Christians should im-
itate the Son's asceticism and contemplate the mystery
of his kenosis, which involved the Son even in the ex-
perience of death. The final glorification means that the
risen Christ earned the right to be recognized in his di-
vine rank as the Son of God. It has been suggested that
Arius conceived of Jesus as being without a human soul,
the Logos himself taking its place, but there is no sup-
port for this thesis in Arius's own writings.

Underlying the whole of Arius's thought is a philo-
sophical perspective that guarantees the uniqueness of
his system among the Origenian-type theologies current
in the Greek-speaking churches of the first half of the
fourth century. Arius's writings show a passionate con-
cern for the radical transcendency of the first principle
in the godhead, and he interprets the Christian notion
of the Son in light of a rigorous, metaphysical deduc-
tion about the nature of the Son as proceeding from the
first principle, his Father. Sharing the metaphysical
concerns of Plotinus in *Ennead* 5 but using the Christian
categories of Father and Son, Arius develops his view of
God and the world only in regard to the origination of
the second principle of the godhead, without regard to
the teaching of the New Testament on the full divinity
of Christ.

This underlying point of view seems to have shaped

incorporated into the early medieval Greek and Latin educational program. Most of Aristotle's writings, especially the scientific, were either unknown or ignored in the West until they were translated from Arabic several centuries later.

By the ninth century a distinctive intellectual tradition had emerged in the Muslim world. Its practitioners, the *falāsifah* ("philosophers"), were set off from and opposed to the *mutakallimūn* ("theologians"). These Muslim philosophers, the first of whom was probably al-Kindī (803–873), attempted to assimilate the Greek philosophical tradition as they knew it and to formulate a conception of Islam as a religion in philosophical terms. The most notable of these philosophers were al-Fārābī (870–950), Ibn Sīnā (980–1037 known in the Latin-speaking world as Avicenna), and Ibn Rushd (1126–1198; Averroës). Each represented a further development and refinement of Aristotle's philosophy, with increasing liberation from the Plotinian supplements and interpretations that had accumulated along the way. This incorporation of Aristotle into the "house of Islam" did not pass unchallenged, and at times the Islamic opposition to Aristotelian philosophy was quite strong. [*See* Falsafah.]

Once arabicized, Aristotle's writings began to spread into other languages. Since the majority of medieval Jewry was living in the Muslim world and speaking and writing Arabic, the Arabic translations of Aristotle eventually became part of the Jewish philosophical tradition, which, although small, comprised a continuous series of notable thinkers throughout the Middle Ages. By the middle of the twelfth century, Aristotle had so thoroughly captivated the Jewish philosophical world that the earlier Neoplatonic writers were not only eclipsed but almost obliterated. From Maimonides (1135/8–1204) on, Jewish philosophical and theological literature was dominated by Aristotle. As in Islam, Jewish thinkers in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, such as Yitshaq Albalag and Mosheh Narboni, absorbed Aristotle's ideas. Critical response was sometimes moderate and sometimes severe and thoroughgoing. Nevertheless, Aristotle's influence was still prominent in Jewish thought throughout the Renaissance, diminishing only in the seventeenth century.

The latinizing of Aristotle occurred both early and late. In the sixth century the Roman writer and civil servant Boethius translated some of Aristotle's logical treatises into Latin; but these first fruits were to be the only works of Aristotle available in the Latin world until the late twelfth century. Because of this lack the Latin philosophical world of the Middle Ages was for several centuries relatively "dark," while the Arabic-Hebrew world was "enlightened." This cultural gap was,

however, to vanish. Initially Aristotle's works were rendered into Latin from Arabic or Hebrew along with the commentaries of Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Rushd; later Latin translations were made directly from the Greek, although these were less common until the fifteenth century. By the middle of the thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225–1274) had virtually the entire Aristotelian corpus at his disposal and was thus able to do for the Christian world what Maimonides and Ibn Rushd had tried to do for their coreligionists: establish a philosophical interpretation of the religious beliefs of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam within the general conceptual framework of Aristotle's philosophy.

Subsequent Christian theologians and philosophers continued Thomas's work by writing commentaries upon Aristotle's treatises and composing philosophical books in which Aristotle's ideas were either expanded or criticized. By the thirteenth century Aristotle was referred to in Arabic, Hebrew, and Latin as "the Philosopher." His writings constituted almost the entire philosophical library and curriculum of the medieval world until the fifteenth century, when signs of a Platonic revival begin to surface in Renaissance Italy. But even in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such thinkers as Giordano Bruno (1548–1600) and Galileo (1564–1642) suffered because of the power of the Aristotelian professors and theologians at Italian universities. [*See* Humanism.]

Influence of Aristotelianism. Perhaps the most attractive feature of Aristotle's philosophy is its comprehensiveness. It is not just that Aristotle wrote on every topic from astronomy to zoology but more that what he did write added up to an integrated system of thought that made good sense out of ordinary human experience. Aristotle's philosophy begins with logic, and the first translations of Aristotle were the Latin versions of several of his logical treatises. Logic was to be a steady interest of medieval philosophers, who, in Latin, Arabic, and Hebrew, continued to develop, refine, and supplement Aristotelian logic as a topic-neutral discipline. [*For further discussion, see* Logic; Scholasticism; *and* Nominalism.]

In most medieval curricula the subject studied after logic was natural science, an area of pervasive interest to Aristotle, who wrote treatises in both the physical and the biological sciences. In addition to his separate studies in the special sciences, Aristotle developed his scientific views into a general theory of nature, a "philosophy of nature." The medievals took Aristotle's general cosmological scheme for granted and usually adopted its main principles. The Aristotelian cosmos is a well-ordered physical system in which natural processes follow regular patterns and determinate goals.

Aristotle's doctrine of natural teleology was a medieval commonplace. The same is true with respect to his doctrine of finitism. The medievals shared his general prejudice against the infinite and believed with him that the world is a "closed" system: finite in size and in the number of individuals contained within it.

Aristotle's philosophy of nature was also attractive to the medieval mind because it allowed for theology. His theory of celestial motion provides the premises for a proof for the existence of a deity; indeed, Aristotle himself gives such a proof, one that was developed by medieval philosophers and theologians through the thirteenth century. Eventually, Aristotle's own natural theology, sketched out in *Metaphysics* 12, became the philosophical paradigm according to which many medieval thinkers developed their own theories of divine attributes. Further, Aristotle's theory of celestial motion allowed for a plurality of "unmoved movers" of the heavenly spheres, although one of them—God—was regarded as primary. Medieval philosophers took this doctrine even further and, under the influence of Plotinian themes, developed a cosmology within which various levels and kinds of cosmic intellects, or powers, devoid of matter, function within the universe. Aristotle's cosmos became to the medieval mind a richly diversified scale of being, some of whose rungs were occupied by intellectual forces that were inferior to the supreme mind, God, but superior to all embodied souls or animate beings, such as humans, dogs, and roses. At this point a marriage between Aristotle and Plotinus had been arranged, one that the biblical doctrine of angels either motivated or could easily be fitted into. The biblical angels were indeed identified by al-Fārābī and Maimonides as Aristotle's separate, unmoved movers. In this context we have really a marriage among three partners: Aristotle, Plotinus, and scripture. [*See also* Attributes of God *and* Proofs for the Existence of God.]

One Aristotelian idea that proved to be troublesome, however, was the thesis of the eternity of the world. After all, what could be more clear or explicit than *Genesis* 1:1: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"? Throughout the Middle Ages, Muslim, Jewish, and Christian thinkers wrestled with what appeared to be an irreconcilable conflict between Aristotle and scripture on this fundamental cosmological doctrine. Various solutions were proposed, some veering toward Aristotle, others toward scripture. Of the former variety was the view of the Muslim philosophers who developed a doctrine of eternal creation, whereby the universe eternally emanates from God, its first and ultimate cause. Others, like Levi ben Gershom, or Gerson-

ides (1288–1344), a French-Jewish philosopher and astronomer, criticized and rejected the Aristotelian eternity thesis altogether and defended the biblical doctrine of creation. But at this point the creationist camp split: some advocated the idea, an "absurdity" to the Greeks, that God created the world *ex nihilo;* others, a small minority including Gersonides, adopted the Platonic suggestion of a divine sculptor crafting the world out of formless, uncreated matter (see Gersonides' *The Wars of the Lord* 6.1.17). Some thinkers, however, believed that this question was not philosophically decidable and that one had to appeal to revelation for the correct answer. This cosmological agnosticism was advocated by Thomas Aquinas and was accepted by many Christian theologians thereafter (*Summa theologiae* 1.46.2).

The question of creation proved to have more than just cosmological implications. Inseparably bound up with it was the issue of miracles and divine omnipotence. Maimonides welded the link between these questions quite tightly: the affirmation of the world's eternity implied strict determinism, which rules out, he claimed, the possibility of miracles (see his *The Guide of the Perplexed* 2.25). In turn, the denial of miracles implies a serious restriction on God's omnipotence. By the end of the thirteenth century some of the more "irreconcilable" philosophical and scientific theses of Aristotle and the Muslim philosophers were condemned as heretical and false by Stephen Tempier, bishop of Paris. Aristotle's doctrine of the eternity of the universe was equated with a curtailment of God's infinite power.

A number of modern scholars have maintained that although the 1277 condemnation by Stephen Tempier superficially looks like theological interference with philosophical inquiry, it really was not. Instead, these scholars claim, thinkers were thus liberated from their Aristotelian fetters and were free to pursue lines of thought, particularly scientific hypotheses, that previously had not been open to them and that were ultimately to replace Aristotelian physics. Whether or not the condemnation itself led to a more critical approach to Aristotelian natural philosophy is difficult to determine. What is undoubtedly true is that from the fourteenth century on there was a growing dissatisfaction with some of the more important ideas in Aristotle's cosmology and physics. That this critique took place in the Jewish philosophical orbit too suggests that it was not so much Stephen Tempier who stimulated the critical spirit as the continuous close study of Aristotle's ideas by independent-minded philosophers and theologians. Gersonides, living far from Paris, criticized Aristotle's major principle of mechanics, the theorem that

every moving body is moved by an external mover. With the rejection of this physical principle, the argument for the existence of God as the first unmoved mover fails.

Perhaps the most thoroughgoing and profound premodern critique of Aristotelian natural philosophy was developed by the Spanish-Jewish theologian Ḥasdai Crescas (1340–1420). Wanting to undermine the whole medieval Aristotelian tradition in Jewish theology, Crescas correctly focused his efforts upon the basic physical theorems of Aristotle. One by one these cornerstones crumble under Crescas's acute criticisms. Why can't there be an actual infinite? Why can't there be a vacuum? Do the heavenly bodies need to be continuously moved by external, incorporeal unmoved movers? Why can't there be a successive series or even a simultaneous plurality of worlds? These and other questions eventually led Crescas to reject the whole Aristotelian physical system. In its place he suggested an actually infinite universe in which the heavenly bodies move according to their own inherent motion, without unmoved movers. Such a universe, Crescas insisted, manifests God's infinite power.

Another persisting perplexity that the medievals inherited from Aristotle had to do with his psychology. Aristotle's obscure, indeed mysterious remarks about "the intellect that makes all things" and "the intellect that becomes all things" (*On the Soul* 3.5) turned out to be one of the most commented-upon passages in his entire corpus. His somewhat parenthetical comment that the former intellect might be immortal and eternal aggravated the matter and opened up a can of philosophical and theological worms. What did Aristotle mean by an active mind and a passive mind? Where are these intellects? Are they immanent within the human mind or transcendent? How do these different intellectual functions work? Wherein lies the immortality of the intellect? These were only a few of the questions that were to vex Aristotle's commentators and medieval disciples. [*See* Soul.]

Alexander of Aphrodisias made several important terminological and conceptual clarifications of this passage. Dubbing the active intellectual part the "agent intellect" *(nous poiētikos)* and the passive part the "material intellect" *(nous hulikos)*, he went on to claim that the former is a unique, transcendent incorporeal power identical with God, whereas the latter is a corporeal disposition of the human body. The agent intellect is the active cause in human cognition; the material intellect is the receptive, or passive, capacity to acquire knowledge. Finally, the mature human intellect perfected by its accumulated cognitions is the "acquired intellect" *(nous epiktētos)*. It is this last member of this cognitive trio that Alexander suggests might be immortal. Jewish, Christian, and Muslim thinkers agreed that the agent intellect was not only the primary active cause in human intellection but also a major factor in prophecy. The prophet is a person whose intellect is so perfect that he is eligible to receive a special "overflow" from the agent intellect that makes him the recipient of divine information, which he conveys to other people. The ordinary religious believer refers to the agent intellect as an angel, since scripture, written in the language of ordinary people, depicts the agent intellect figuratively so as to give the reader some idea of how prophecy is given.

A number of Parisian philosophers, following Ibn Rushd's conclusion that agent intellect and material intellect are virtually and actually one, could not quite reconcile that view with their religious belief in individual immortality. Thus emerged the notorious doctrine of the double truth, according to which what is taught by divine revelation may not be compatible with what is taught by sound philosophy. Throughout the late thirteenth century the Latin philosophical-theological scene was obsessed with this issue, until the "Latin Averroists" were finally suppressed. In this battle to "protect the faith" Thomas Aquinas wrote a polemical essay against the Averroists. According to him, the agent intellect is not a unique transcendent power but is immanent in each human mind, which is as a whole a substance capable of independent existence. Individual immortality is thereby ensured *(Summa theologiae* 1.75, 76, 79, and *On the Unicity of the Intellect: Against the Averroists).*

Despite the various criticisms made of these different aspects of Aristotle's doctrines, his influence remained strong throughout the Middle Ages and even in the Renaissance. Galileo's frequent sarcastic and mordant criticisms of the "simple-minded" Aristotelian professors, who prefer to look at the heavens in their books rather than through the telescope, testify to the still-living tradition of Aristotelian thought in the seventeenth century. [*See* Science and Religion.]

Aristotelianism has been influential in the twentieth century in Roman Catholic theological circles and in university faculties. Recently, however, the Aristotelian imprint upon Christian theology has begun to seem either foreign or obsolete to theologians who look to modern philosophers for inspiration. [*See* Theology.] Nevertheless, Aristotle's metaphysical ideas and vocabulary persist and are defended or at least employed by some contemporary Anglo-American philosophers, such as P. F. Strawson, who consider him to be one of the more

suggestive thinkers in the classical tradition of Western philosophy.

[*See also the biographies of philosophers and theologians mentioned herein.*]

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SEYMOUR FELDMAN

ARISTOTLE (384–322 BCE), Greek philosopher, who so dominated philosophical thought for almost ten centuries that he was frequently referred to simply as "the Philosopher." According to Dante, Aristotle was "the master of all who know." Writing on almost every known subject of intellectual inquiry, from astronomy through zoology, and inventing entirely new fields, such as logic, Aristotle produced a literary corpus whose influence remains with us even in our everyday language, where we still use such Aristotelian expressions as "substance," "quality," "accident," and "potentiality."

Unlike his two great Greek predecessors, Socrates and Plato, Aristotle was not an Athenian but a northern Greek. He was born in Chalcidice in 384 BCE to a father who was a physician in the Macedonian court, and the son was to inherit the father's interest in the biological sciences. At the age of eighteen, Aristotle went to Athens to study in Plato's Academy, where he stayed for about twenty years, until Plato's death in 347. In 342 he was invited to Macedonia to become the tutor of the young Alexander; a few years later he returned to Athens, where he established a school of his own. For reasons we do not know—perhaps political—Aristotle left Athens in 323, and he died a year later. His school, however, continued for several centuries. Those portions of

Aristotle's literary output that were to have religious significance will be the main concerns of the present discussion.

One of Aristotle's earliest writings is the short essay entitled *Categories*. In the opening chapters, Aristotle lays down a conceptual framework for the description of all existent things. The most important point is his distinction between substance and accident: substance is that which is independent and ontologically ultimate, relatively speaking, whereas accident depends upon substance and is thus derivative. For example, Socrates is a basic entity insofar as all his qualities of height, weight, eye color, speech habits, and so forth belong to him as a particular human being and in this sense are "in" him. Yet these features are such that they can be acquired or lost. In this sense, they are not essential. What makes Socrates a man, however, is essential and constitutes his substance, whereas the inhering properties are various sorts of accidents.

In the Middle Ages this ontological distinction was used in several ways. First, the biblical God of Abraham was transfigured into the primary substance, totally independent of anything else and devoid of any and all accidents. In fact, according to some medieval and early modern philosophers (e.g., Descartes and Spinoza), God is the only being that can truly be called substance. Second, in Christian theology, Aristotle's distinction between substance and accident was used to express one of its more important theological doctrines, that of the Eucharist. In one common formulation of this dogma, the substance of the bread on the altar is miraculously transformed into another substance, the body of Christ, although the accidents of the bread are still observed; for, as Aristotle himself suggested, the accidents are separable from the substance in which they inhere. This Aristotelian terminology is still employed by some Christian theologians.

One of Aristotle's main concerns was science, both the special sciences, such as biology and physics, and general methodological questions about scientific goals and procedures. From his various scientific pursuits there emerged a general worldview that proved to have an immense impact upon subsequent philosophical and religious thought. Nature, for Aristotle, is a unified physical system embodying both law and purpose and ultimately explicable in terms of the transcendent supranatural substance, God. As the first, efficient, and final cause of the world's motion and activity, God is responsible for its order and development, as all other living things strive to imitate God's perfection. In some of his works, most notably *Metaphysics* 12.10, Aristotle's language takes on a decidedly religious tone, one that

was to reverberate throughout the Middle Ages. God is described by Aristotle as one, the object of all desire, pure mind, immutable, eternal, and simple. All of these divine attributes were discussed by later theologians and used in their attempts to "aristotelianize" biblical thought.

The modern term *psychology* is derived from the Greek word *psuchē*, which is usually translated into English as "soul." One of the more important treatises written by Aristotle is *On the Soul*, which is primarily devoted to a discussion of the various activities of living things, such as sensation, imagination, thinking, and feeling. Contrary to Plato, Aristotle generally believed the soul to be inseparable from the body, since it is the form of the living organism. The typical behavior of the organism constitutes its form, or soul. The human soul is the set of all the typical modes of human behavior, for instance, sensing, thinking, feeling, and so on. Of course, each human being will have his or her own soul, individuated by a particular mode of sensing, thinking, and feeling. In a few places in this treatise Aristotle entertains the hypothesis that the soul, or one part of it, the intellect, is immortal (*On the Soul* 1.4.408b18–20; 2.1.413a6; 2.2.413b24–26; 3.5.430a20–25). But his language is speculative and tentative, and in some passages even obscure; it is therefore not easy to determine whether he had any definite doctrine of individual immortality, especially since his general psychological thesis emphasizes the soul's intimate relationship with the body. Again, later philosophers were to develop this suggestion of the intellect's separability from matter into a variety of theories about the soul's immortality.

Aristotle's psychology provided him with a suitable basis for his moral philosophy, in particular the doctrine of human happiness. For his account of the meaning and goal of human life is established upon empirical conclusions about the nature of the human soul. It is Aristotle's general thesis that the truly human life is a life in which the unique characteristics of man are developed to their utmost. Unlike most, if not all, animals, man is both a rational and social being, and as such he ought to perfect his rational and social capacities and live a life wherein these potentialities are most efficiently expressed. This is Aristotle's doctrine of the virtues, both moral and intellectual. Development of the moral virtues leads to ethical perfection and the social order, wherein human beings collectively pursue the realization of the essential social dimension of their generic nature.

For Aristotle man is neither a brute nor a god; hence, he needs to live among others. Political groupings are therefore not artificial impositions but natural out-

growths of man's essential being. Nevertheless, man is not just a social animal, he is also endowed with reason. And so Aristotle ultimately insists upon the supremacy of the intellectual virtues, the life of contemplation. At this juncture the somewhat vague suggestions in his psychology about the immortality of the reasoning part of the human soul and the ethical priority of the contemplative life converge to suggest, at least to the medievals, an Aristotelian type of immortality. Whatever the supranatural implications of such suggestions, it is clear that Aristotelian moral philosophy is rooted in the psychological and social dimensions of human life. The *summum bonum* is the life lived by man through the perfection and actualization of what he essentially and naturally is. Thus, in Aristotle's philosophical system, biology, psychology, ethics, and politics are integrated to provide a coherent framework for human development and perfection.

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SEYMOUR FELDMAN

ARIUS (c. 250–336), Christian priest declared a heretic for his doctrines about God. Of Libyan extraction, Arius may have been born in Alexandria. He is first mentioned under the rule of Peter I, bishop of Alexandria (300–311), as a temporary supporter of the schismatic Meletios of Lycopolis. He became a priest in the spring of 312 under the episcopacy of Achillas. The early sources transmit no information about his pastoral activity or the development of his theology, which ultimately denied the full divinity of Christ. He was renowned in Alexandria as a preacher. His new method of exegesis, based on a strict pattern of rationalistic logic, was striking for Alexandrian Christianity during the second decade of the fourth century, at a time when the intellectually impoverished local church was recovering from the long persecutions of Diocletian and Maximus.

As pastor of Baucalis, one of the most heavily populated districts in the Christian area of Alexandria, Arius engaged his personal scholarship in fierce opposition to the preaching of Bishop Alexander of Alexandria. Around 318, after a series of unsuccessful conciliatory conferences, Arius and his closest partisans were excommunicated by the bishop's synod. Before leaving the city, from which he had been banished, he wrote a popular summary of his doctrine, entitled *Thalia* (The Banquet). At the same time Alexander published a circular letter in which he denounced the condemned opinions of Arius. A year or so later, the bishop completed his synodal letter with a report on the dispute, which he sent to Alexander, bishop of Thessalonica.

Instead of being settled in the local church, the "Arian" dispute caused a widespread uproar for several generations. Under the leadership of Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, a formidable group of Eastern bishops offered support and protection to the banished Arius and urged Alexander to reinstate him in the clergy. In 325 the imperial Council of Nicaea was called by the emperor Constantine and convened in his presence in order to end the Arian dispute. Arius himself was exiled to a western province. With very few exceptions, the 250 bishops assembled in Nicaea signed his condemnation. Three years later, in 328, Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis of Nicaea, who had also been condemned and exiled in 325, succeeded in regaining their seats. They

exerted strong psychological pressure on Constantine and convinced him to nullify the decree exiling Arius. The old Alexandrian priest submitted to the emperor a creed formulated in a way that the latter could easily find acceptable, trying thereby to obtain his readmission to the Alexandrian clergy. But the church of Alexandria, ruled from 328 by the young Athanasius, opposed Arius's claim.

Arius died in 336 and his name was soon condemned by the same Eastern bishops who had been his supporters during his lifetime. His personal philosophical preconceptions (which reflected a Neoplatonic form of monotheism—God himself, like the One in Plotinus's thought, lacks any similarity or communication with the second principle, his Son) had always been ignored by the Eastern bishops. Of Arius's writings nothing survives except a few letters and some fragments. His name, nonetheless, was given to the most dramatic controversy in the church of the fourth century.

[*See also* Arianism.]

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ARJUNA. Of the Pāṇḍavas, the five sons of Pāṇḍu in the *Mahābhārata*, Arjuna is the third oldest, or "middle" Pāṇḍava. He is the youngest son of Kuntī, mother of the three oldest brothers. All five are only putatively Pāṇḍu's sons, for each had been sired by a god whom the mother invoked in consultation with Pāṇḍu, who had been cursed not to have sexual relations on pain of death. Unbeknown to the Pāṇḍavas, there is also a sixth brother, Karṇa, whom Kuntī had abandoned in her youth. Arjuna is the son of Indra, king of the gods, and Karṇa is the son of the sun god Sūrya.

For Arjuna's conception, Pāṇḍu performs special *tapas* (ascetic acts) to gain Indra's cooperation in siring his best son. At the infant's birth, a heavenly voice announces his glory and forecasts his success, predicting that he will perform three sacrifices. Arjuna rather than his eldest known brother, Yudhiṣṭhira, will be the chief sacrificer *(yajamāna)* in the sacrificial acts that connect the story. Thus, one of Arjuna's names is Kirīṭin ("the crowned one"). Furthermore, it will be through Arjuna's son Abhimanyu that the royal lineage will continue. But the Pāṇḍavas will also act in concert, presenting a refracted image of the ideal king and sacrificer.

Arjuna, his brothers, and their cousins the Kauravas study weaponry with the brahman Droṇa. Arjuna becomes his best pupil and receives instruction in using the doomsday weapon of Śiva—the Brahmaśiras, or "Head of Brahmā." But when it comes time to display his prowess in a tournament, Arjuna is matched by his unknown brother Karṇa, who from this point on becomes the champion of the Kauravas.

Deepening dimensions of Arjuna's role are now conveyed in three episodes: the marriage of Draupadī, Arjuna's sojourn in the forest, and the burning of Khāṇḍava Forest. In the first episode, he succeeds where all others have failed in an archery feat that wins him the hand of the fire-born Draupadī, incarnation of the goddess Śrī (Prosperity), who in her dark aspect as Kṛṣṇā ("black lady") is also the epic's personification of the goddess of destruction. Although Draupadī soon weds all five Pāṇḍavas, Arjuna remains her favorite. Next, because of his violation of an agreement among the brothers never to intrude when any one of them is alone with Draupadī, Arjuna is banished for twelve years. He is supposed to be a celibate (brahmacārin), but he nonetheless contracts three additional marriages during this period, the last to his cross-cousin Kṛṣṇa's sister Subhadrā. She will bear him Abhimanyu. Arjuna then consolidates his relation with Kṛṣṇa and they destroy Khāṇḍava Forest, each on a separate chariot, to sate the god Agni (Fire). Here one learns that in former lives Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa were the ṛṣis Nara ("man," perhaps also "soul," or puruṣa) and Nārāyaṇa (a cosmic form of Viṣṇu). Furthermore, this passage introduces them as "the two Kṛṣṇas," a foreshadowing of the war in which they will be known as "the two Kṛṣṇas on one chariot," especially in reference to their chariot duel with Arjuna's brother Karṇa.

Thus Kṛṣṇa shares his name not only with the goddess Draupadī-Kṛṣṇā, but with Arjuna. Arjuna itself means "silver" or "white," and the name Kṛṣṇa evokes opposite dimensions. The name they share links all three in the destructive tasks they must undertake to inaugurate the "sacrifice of battle."

In the two episodes in which Arjuna next figures prominently, he prepares himself for battle in ways that show deepening connections with the destructive Śiva. During the Pāṇḍavas' exile after the disastrous dice match with the Kauravas, Arjuna performs tapas to Śiva until the god appears to grant Arjuna's use of the doomsday weapon. Śiva's touch permits Arjuna to ascend to heaven, where he is further instructed by Indra. Later, when the Pāṇḍavas disguise themselves in their thirteenth year of exile, Arjuna becomes a eunuch dancing instructor, recalling myths of Śiva's castration and his lordship of the dance. In battle, Arjuna will "dance"

on his chariot and will see Śiva before him bearing a lance and carrying out the actual destruction of his foes.

Arjuna's most crucial scene, however, is that described in the Bhagavadgītā. Poised on his chariot to begin the war, with Kṛṣṇa now his charioteer, he is overcome with compassion for his foes and refuses to fight. Kṛṣṇa unveils Arjuna's true warrior calling and reveals his own "omniform" as Viṣṇu in the destructive form of Time. Arjuna's role is to be the instrument of a destruction that will occur anyway. In submitting to Kṛṣṇa's teaching, Arjuna becomes the ideal bhakta, or devotee. This pivotal epic figure thus represents the ideal king and sacrificer, the principal husband of the incarnation of the Goddess, the son of Indra and protégé of Śiva, and the companion and ideal devotee of the avatāra.

[See also Mahābhārata and Bhagavadgītā.]

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ALF HILTEBEITEL

ARMENIAN CHURCH. According to legend, the apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew were the original evangelizers of Armenia. Reliable historical data indicate that there were bishops in western Armenia during the third century, principally in Ashtishat in the province of Taron. Eusebius of Caesarea mentions "brethren in Armenia of whom Merozanes was the bishop"; Dionysius of Alexandria wrote a letter on repentance to Merozanes in 251. There are scattered stories of Armenian martyrs during the third century, but records are meager and mostly questionable.

Historical Development of the Church in Armenia. The cultural contacts of the Armenians with the Greeks in the west and the Syrians in the south and the missionary outreach of important Christian centers in Caesarea and Edessa facilitated the introduction of the Christian religion into Armenia, which was a kingdom under Roman protectorate. Following the Edict of Toleration issued in 313 by Emperor Constantine at Milan, the king of Armenia, Tiridates III (298–330), and his courtiers were converted and baptized by Gregory the

Illuminator, the apostle of Armenia. Armenia became in 314 the first nation with Christianity as its established state religion. [*See* Armenian Religion *and the biography of Gregory the Illuminator.*]

Following the king's baptism, Gregory traveled to Caesarea (Cappadocia) in the fall of 314 and was consecrated by Metropolitan Leontius as the first catholicos, or chief bishop, of the Armenian church. Gregory's consecration marked the farthest extension of the Christian church in northeast Asia Minor from its base in Caesarea, where Gregory himself had been raised and educated. The formal conversion of Armenia reinforced its political and cultural ties with the Roman world.

On his return, Gregory was installed as catholicos by Bishop Peter of Sebaste; he then proceeded to the royal city of Vagarshapat, which became the catholicate of the Armenian church. The city was renamed Echmiadzin ("descent of the Only-begotten") in celebration of the vision in which Gregory saw Christ strike the ground three times with a golden hammer and show the form of the cathedral to be built.

Gregory's son succeeded him in 325 as catholicos and was one of the bishops who participated in the Council of Nicaea convened in the same year. A number of Gregory's descendants followed him as catholicos, in accordance with a hereditary system reflecting the feudal society of the time. Only in the fifth century did the office become elective.

The first Armenian church council was called in Ashtishat in about 354 by Catholicos Nersēs I. [*See the biography of Nersēs the Great.*] Following the example of his contemporaries, Basil of Caesarea and Eustathius of Sebaste, Nersēs had the council enact rules for moral discipline and for the establishment of monastic and charitable institutions in the country.

The Armenian church was originally formed as an eastern province connected with the see of Caesarea. Later, as the authority of Caesarea waned and Greater Armenia was divided between Rome and Persia in 387, the Armenian church pursued an independent course. Catholicos Sahak I acceded to the catholicate in 389 without reference to the see of Caesarea. [*See the biography of Sahak Parthev.*] At the Council of Shahapivan in 444, Sahak's successor, Hovsep I, was confirmed as catholicos, thereby affirming the autonomy of the Armenian church.

After the partition of Armenia, the church posed an enduring political problem for the Persians. For about three hundred years the latter never ceased to exert pressure on the Armenians to break their religious and cultural ties with the Greeks. The new religion from the west, now flourishing in Armenia, so alarmed Yazkert II of Persia (438–457) that he issued an edict bidding the

Armenians to renounce their faith and embrace Mazdaism. After an unsuccessful revolt, in which the Armenian hero Vartan Mamikonian was killed in battle, the resistance continued and a second revolt in 481 forced King Firuz to declare full recognition of freedom of religion for Armenians.

The fifth century is considered the golden age in the history of the Armenian people and its church. The leadership of Catholicos Sahak I and the missionary and literary labors of Mesrop Mashtots' gave rise to the Christian culture of the Armenian people. Complete translation was made of the scriptures as well as of the more important liturgical and theological writings of the eminent church fathers. [*See the biography of Mashtots'.*]

The catholicate moved many times with the shifts of the center of political power in the nation. In 484, it moved to Duin, where it remained until 901. An even more significant move was made with the establishment in 1116 of the catholicate in Cilicia, where the Armenian princes had settled and founded principalities and later a kingdom (1080–1375). The see was returned to its original site at Echmiadzin in 1441.

There have been a number of jurisdictional schisms in the history of the church. The longest of these began in 1113 when a schismatic catholicos, David, was installed on the island of Al'thamar in the province of Van. He opposed the lawful incumbent, Gregory, whose seat was then located outside Armenian territory. David tried and failed to exercise jurisdiction over Greater Armenia in the northeast. The last incumbent of Al'thamar died in 1895 without a successor.

A more serious and still unresolved division came about in 1441 when the see, then in Cilicia, was returned to Echmiadzin by the decision of a church assembly. Despite the fact that the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia had fallen to the Mamluks of Egypt in 1375, and there was no reason to maintain the center of the church away from its original location, the incumbent of the see (in the city of Sis) refused to comply. The Cilician catholicate has retained its independent existence. Following World War I, its seat was moved from Sis to Antelias, Lebanon.

As early as the twelfth century, Armenians came into contact with the Latin church through close cultural and political ties with the Crusaders. Aided by the missionary activities of Franciscans and Dominicans, a latinizing movement gained ground among liberal elements in the church. Although this movement—of varying strength—lasted for about four hundred years, it did not result in any significant secession to Rome. Only in 1831, under a new Ottoman policy toward Christian minorities, was an Armenian Rite Catholic

church within the Roman communion legally recognized. The catholicate of Armenian Catholics is located in Beirut, Lebanon.

In 1830, American Protestants began their missionary activity in Asia Minor. In 1846, the Ottoman government legally recognized the separate status of an Armenian Protestant community. Continued affiliation of Armenian evangelicals with American missionary organizations has been another source of Western influence. Schools and colleges have been established and the Bible translated into the modern vernacular.

It should be noted that the early divisions within the church did not arise on dogmatic grounds. They were caused primarily by the resistance of secular rulers to the presence within their territories of a church community dependent on an authority beyond their frontiers and influence. Complete secessions on dogmatic grounds have occurred only in the nineteenth century with the formation of Armenian Roman Catholic and Protestant Evangelical church communities.

The nineteenth century brought important changes to the juridical status of the church after Russia took eastern Armenia from the Persians in 1828. The tsar issued a statute that was accepted by the ruling catholicos even though it reduced his power by creating a standing synod of bishops tightly controlled by the government.

In 1863 in western Armenia the church received a constitution for the management of its own affairs as part of the Ottoman civil code. The constitution provided for a national assembly with the Armenian patriarch of Constantinople as its president. The assembly had two administrative councils, religious and civil. This development was in keeping with the long-standing Ottoman policy of giving leaders of Christian minorities jurisdiction over their own internal affairs, inasmuch as Christians could not be made subject to the Qur'anic law. This system ended after World War I.

Twentieth-Century Developments. The catholicos of all Armenians, residing at Echmiadzin in the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, remains the supreme head of the Armenian church. Outside the U.S.S.R., each established church community, whether under Echmiadzin or another jurisdiction, has its own form of regulations or bylaws, adapted to local political or cultural conditions. By and large, these regulations are formed on the principle of conciliarity; lay participation at all levels of administration is common.

The ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the catholicos in Echmiadzin extends over twenty dioceses: Armenia South, Armenia North, Tbilisi, Baku, Moscow, Bucharest, Sofia, Baghdad, Calcutta, Sydney, Cairo, Vienna, Paris, London, New York, Los Angeles, Toronto, Buenos Aires, Istanbul, and Jerusalem. The catholicos of the Ar-

menians of Cilicia in Antelias, Lebanon, presides over four dioceses: Beirut, Aleppo, Damascus, and Nicosia. In the 1950s, for political reasons, the dioceses of Tehran, Athens, and the two newly created dioceses of New York and Los Angeles, paralleling those under Echmiadzin, came under the jurisdiction of the catholicos of Cilicia. The legitimacy of these changes of jurisdiction is a matter of continuing dispute.

There are Armenian patriarchates established in Jerusalem and Istanbul. Each of these comprises only one local diocese. The patriarch of Jerusalem is one of the three custodians of Christian holy places in and around Jerusalem. The patriarch of Istanbul, once the administrator of the entire Armenian "nation" in the Ottoman empire, now controls only the diocese of Istanbul itself and a number of small struggling parishes in the interior of Turkey. At present the patriarchate does not have a written constitution and is governed by the patriarch on the basis of established customs and practices.

Liturgy. The prototype of the Divine Liturgy, or Eucharist, has been the liturgy of Basil of Caesarea, which was translated into Armenian in the fifth century. Later this liturgy gave way to the Byzantine liturgy of Chrysostom. During the period of the Crusades, however, Latin influence brought about some minor changes in the ceremonials and vestments. From the tenth century to the twentieth, the form of the liturgy has remained constant with the exception of the addition of the Last Gospel (*Jn.* 1:1–15) at the end of the Eucharist.

The use of unleavened bread and unmixed red wine was already established during the seventh century. Communion is given in both elements, with the communicant standing. The sacrament is reserved but not ceremonially venerated. At the conclusion of the Eucharist, fragments of thin unleavened bread, simply blessed, are distributed to those not receiving communion.

Seven offices, including Nocturn, Matins, Prime, Midday office, Vespers, Peace, and Compline, comprise the liturgy of the canonical hours. There are other occasional offices such as the Penitential, the Memorial, the Processional, and the Adoration of the Church. In the fourteenth century, the principal sacraments were counted as seven following Latin custom: baptism, chrismation, eucharist, penance, ordination, marriage, and anointing. The church does not practice extreme unction as it is known in the Latin rite. Baptism, ordinarily of infants, is administered by immersion; chrismation (confirmation) and then communion follow immediately after baptism. This sacrament of initiation conforms to the practice of the other Eastern churches.

Fasting calls for abstention from all animal foods.

Apart from the forty days of Lent, there are ten weekly fasts of five days each. Wednesdays and Fridays are fast days, except during the fifty days following Easter.

About 360 saints (including groups of saints under collective names) are recognized in the directory of feasts. Of these, 100 are biblical, 100 are Armenian, and 160 are non-Armenian belonging to the first five centuries of the Christian era. Gregory of Datev (early fifteenth century) is the last of the saints formally recognized by the church. [*See the biography of Gregory of Datev.*] The Holy Virgin has a unique position as foremost among the saints and is venerated extensively in liturgical worship.

The directory of feasts is arranged on the septenary principle. Each liturgical observance falls on a day in the week, numbered in the series of weeks following the Sunday nearest to the anchor date of one of the four periods of the annual liturgical cycle. Easter moves on a range of thirty-five days; the first Sunday of Advent and the feasts of the Assumption and Exaltation move on a range of seven days. Seven feasts commemorating episodes in the life of the Virgin Mary are observed on fixed dates. Dominical feasts fall on Sundays.

Clergy. There are three major orders of the clergy, according to the tradition of all ancient churches: deacon, priest, and bishop. "Archbishop" is an honorary title conferred by the catholicos. Parish priests are ordinarily chosen from among married men; marriage after ordination is not allowed, although several exceptions have been made since the 1940s. Bishops are chosen from among the celibate clergy. Widowed priests may be promoted to the episcopate. Clergy are trained in seminaries at Echmiadzin, Jerusalem, and Antelias.

Doctrine. Of the seven ecumenical councils, the Armenian church, in company with the Coptic and the Syrian Orthodox churches, acknowledges the first three: Nicaea (325) against Arianism; Constantinople (381) against Apollinarianism; and Ephesus (431) against Nestorianism. It does not accept the fourth, Chalcedon, and has made no pronouncements about the remaining three. It should be noted, however, that the church condemns Eutychianism, does not agree with the doctrine of two wills in the one person of Christ, and holds to the veneration of icons. The Armenian church reveres and follows the teachings of all the leading church fathers of the first five centuries of the Christian era, with the exception of Pope Leo I.

The Council of Chalcedon (451) caused an intense and lasting controversy in Eastern Christendom about the relation of divinity and humanity in the person of Christ. Of the two parties for or against Chalcedon in the Armenian church, the latter prevailed at a council in 607. Nevertheless, ambivalence over the problem of the natures of Christ continued in the church down to the fourteenth century. Since then the church has held the doctrine that "one is the nature of the Word of God incarnate." The dispute on this matter of dogma has reflected the contest between those who sought political advantage from the West and those who stood for national independence. From Constantine to the last emperor of Byzantium, unity of faith was considered concomitant to the unity of the empire. Consequently, for non-Greek churches of the East that unity meant submission to Byzantium, where the emperor was the effective head of the church and the dogmatic decrees of the general councils promulgated by the emperors were enforceable by law on pain of exile.

During the second half of the twelfth century, the great catholicos Nersēs of Cla, "the Graceful," maintained that there was no contradiction between the Chalcedonian teaching of "two natures" and the teaching of the "one nature." [*See the biography of Nersēs of Cla.*] Shortly thereafter, a synod convened by Catholicos Gregory IV and attended by thirty-three bishops stated in a declaration to the emperor and patriarch of Constantinople: "We confess, in agreement with you, the theory of the dual nature of the ineffable oneness of Christ." Significantly, the synod did not refer to the Council of Chalcedon itself. Later synods in the fourteenth century affirmed formal reunion with Rome but were ineffectual because there was no representation from the area of Greater Armenia in the northeast and especially because the faithful were not in sympathy with such a move.

Creeds. The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed is recited in the liturgy every Sunday. There is also a somewhat longer creed, introduced during the fourteenth century and used after confession of sins by a penitent. It refers to the Cyrilian formula mentioned above: "One is the nature of the incarnate Word of God." A short creed is recited at the beginning of the sacrament of baptism.

Canon law. The canons of the church, contained in the *Book of Canons*, are grouped in three sections. The first is the codex formed by John of Odzun in 725. It brings together various legislations—"apostolic," post-apostolic, and conciliar—as well as decretals of Greek and Armenian church fathers. The second section, from the eighth to the twelfth centuries, consists of later conciliar canons and decretals of church fathers. A less extensive third section, added in the twelfth century, deals with matters of civil law.

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of the Nation), 3 vols. (1912–1927; reprint, Beirut, 1959–1961), which uses primary sources extensively. A similar but older work is that by Michael Chamchean, *Patmut'iwn Hayots*, 3 vols. (Venice, 1784–1786). An abridged edition has been translated into English by Johannes Audell as *History of Armenia*, 2 vols. (Calcutta, 1827). There are also three smaller histories of the Armenian church entitled *Patmut'iwn hay ekeghets' woy:* those by Melchisedek Muratean (Jerusalem, 1872), Abraham Zaminean (Nor Nakhijevan, 1908), and Kevork Mesrop (Istanbul, 1913–1914). Other studies in Armenian church history are either topical or periodic. However, ecclesiastical material is often incorporated into secular histories. Important among these are Jacques de Morgan's *Histoire du peuple arménien: Depuis les temps les plus reculés de ses annales jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris, 1919), translated by Ernest F. Barry as *The History of the Armenian People: From the Remotest Times to the Present Day* (Boston, 1965); François Tournebize's *Histoire politique et religieuse de l'Arménie* (Paris, 1910); and René Grousset's *Histoire de l'Arménien des origins à 1071* (Paris, 1947).

TIRAN NERSOYAN

ARMENIAN RELIGION.

The Armenians' remotest ancestors immigrated to Anatolia in the mid-second millennium BCE. Related to speakers of the Thraco-Phrygian languages of the Indo-European family, they probably brought with them a religion akin to that of the proto-Greeks, adopting also elements of the cultures of Asianic peoples such as the Hittites, from whose name the Armenian word *hay* ("Armenian") may be derived. Thus, the Armenian divinity Tork' is the Hittite Tarhundas, and the Armenian word now used for "God," *Astuac*, may have been the name of an Asianic deity, although its etymology remains hypothetical. The Armenian word *di-k'* ("god[s]") is an Indo-European cognate to the Latin *deus*.

The Armenians were at first concentrated in the area of Van (Urartean Biaina), a city on the southeastern shore of Lake Van, in eastern Anatolia, and in the Sasun region, a mountainous district to the west of the lake. The Armenian god Vahagn (Av., Verethraghna; cf. Sogdian *Vashaghn*), whose cult centered in the area of present-day Muş, appears to have assimilated the dragon-slaying exploits of the Urartean Teisheba, a weather god. An Urartean "gate of God" in the rock of Van was consecrated to Mher (Av., Mithra) and is still known in the living epic of Sasun as *Mheri durn* ("gate of Mher"), preserving the Urartean usage.

Although Herodotus in the fifth century BCE still recalled the Armenians as Phrygian colonists of Phrygian-like speech, they had been conquered twice—first by the Medes about 583 BCE, then by the Persians under Cyrus II the Great—and had assimilated elements of the conquering cultures. After the conquest of Cyrus, the faith of the Iranian prophet Zarathushtra (Zoroaster) was to exercise the primary influence upon the Armenian religion; indeed, Zoroaster was believed by Clement of Alexandria and other classical writers to have been identical with Ēr, the son of Armenios of the *Republic* of Plato. Strabo (*Geography* 11.13.9, 11.14.6) declared that the Armenians and the Medes performed the same religious rites, those "of the Persians," the Medes having been also the source of the way of life (*ethē*) of the Persians themselves. Like the Armenian language, which retains its ancient and distinct character while preserving a preponderance of Northwestern Iranian loan-words of the pre-Sasanid period, the ancient religion of the Armenians apparently retained distinct local features, although the great majority of its religious terms and practices belong to the Zoroastrianism of Arsacid Iran and earlier periods.

Ahura Mazdā (OPers., Ahuramazda), creator god of Zoroastrianism, was worshiped by the Armenians as Aramazd, the Parthian form of his name. The principal cult center of Aramazd, the "father of all" (Agathangelos, para. 785), was a temple in Ani, Daranaghi, where the necropolis of the Armenian Arsacids was also located. (Later, the center of the cult shifted to the royal capital at Bagawan, to the east.) The shrine of Barshamin (Sem., Ba'al Shamin, "the lord of heaven") was established at T'ordan, a village near Ani, probably to indicate that the Semitic god was seen to resemble the Iranian creator god. A similar reformist trend toward monotheism based on an Iranian model is seen in the inscriptions of Arebsun in nearby Cappadocia, probably of the late Achaemenid period, in which is described in Aramaic the marriage to Bel (Baal) of the "religion of Mazdā-worship" (OPers., *dainâ mazdayasnîsh*).

According to Movsēs Khorenats'i, Mazhan, the brother of King Artashēs I (Gr., Artaxias; early second century BCE), served as the priest of Aramazd, while the noble families (*nakharars*) served the lesser divinities of whom Aramazd was regarded as the maker; the Vah(n)unis, for instance, may even derive their name from Vahagn, whom they served. According to foreign writers, the most popular of these lesser divinities was Anahit (Gr., Anaitis; OIran., Anāhitā), and it is she who seems to be shown in the mass-produced terra-cotta votive figurines found at Artaxata and other ancient Armenian sites, with one or several male children clinging to her matronly robes, like the scenes of Cybele and the infant Attis. The Armenian Nanē (Pth., *Nanai; Gr., Nanaia) seems to have been a goddess of almost identical character, except that Anahit, as in Iran, was also a goddess of the waters, which Nanē probably was not. Another Armenian goddess, Astghik ("little star"), consort of Vahagn, seems to be identical with Astarte.

Armenian and pre-Sasanid Iranian temples often contained cult statues—such shrines were called in Armenian *bagins* ("places of the god")—but it seems that, with or without images, all Armenian temples had fire altars, called *atrushan*s (like *bagīn*, a Middle Iranian loanword), so that the major Zoroastrian rites might be consecrated there. A place for fire, and its light, was a focal point of worship and cultic life.

The chief shrine of Vahagn stood at Ashtishat ("rich in *yasht*s" ["acts of worship"]), the place later consecrated to Saint John the Baptist by Gregory the Illuminator as the earliest see of the Armenian church. Vahagn is described in a fragment of a hymn preserved by Khorenats'i (1.31) as "sun-eyed" and "fiery-haired," attributes found in the Avesta and later applied in Christian Armenia to Mary and to seraphs. From various sources it appears that Vahagn was regarded as a sun god, perhaps acquiring this feature from Mihr (Mithra), who is closely associated with the sun in Zoroastrianism. There is oblique evidence of a conflict between devotees of the two gods in Armenia. Nonetheless, the Armenian word for a pagan temple, *mehean*, containing the name of Mithra, indicates the god's great importance, and it is noteworthy that this term for a Zoroastrian place of rites is very similar to, but much earlier than, the Persian *dar-i Mihr* (with which the Armenian *Mheri duṙn*, mentioned above, is indeed identical).

Among the other gods, the Armenians worshiped Tir (MIran., Tīr), chief of the scribal art and keeper of celestial records, including, some believed, those of human destiny. He survives in modern Armenian folklore as the Grogh ("writer"); a clairvoyant is called *Groghi gzir* ("deputy of the Grogh"). Spandaramet (MIran., Spandārmad; Av., Spenta Ārmaiti), goddess of the earth, was also venerated. (Her name is rendered as "Dionysos" in the fifth-century Armenian translation of the biblical books of the Maccabees.) Another form of the same name, *sandaramet*, sometimes pluralized with *-k'* or shortened to *sandark'* (cf. Cappadocian *Sondara*), is Southwestern Iranian and may reflect pre-Zoroastrian beliefs, for it is a common noun used in Armenian texts to refer simply to the underworld. Tork' of Anggh (Ingila), treated by Khorenats'i as a legendary and fearsome hero, is an Asianic divinity equated with Nergal in the Armenian translation of the Bible. There was an Armenian royal necropolis at Anggh, so it seems that Tork' was regarded as a divinity of the underworld. Two of the Zoroastrian Amesha Spentas, Haurvatāt ("health") and Ameretāt ("long life"), often paired, gave their name to a flower (see Agathangelos, para. 643), which Armenian maidens pluck in silence on Ascension

Eve (talking at meals is believed by Zoroastrians to offend the two divinities).

Ancient Armenians celebrated the Iranian New Year, Nawasard (OPers., *Navasarda), which was consecrated to Aramazd. A midwinter feast of fire, Ahekan (OPers., *Athrakāna), still survives with its rituals intact in Christianity as Tearnendaṙaj, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord to the Temple. The old month-name of Mehekan preserves the memory of Mihragān, the feast of Mithra, and Anahit seems to have received special reverence on Vardavaṙ, a feast of roses and of the waters. At year's end, Hrotits' (from Avestan *Fravashayō*) commemorated the holy spirits of the departed, leading Agathangelos (para. 16) to accuse the Armenians of being *uruapashtk'* ("worshipers of souls").

Although monotheistic in its regard for Ahura Mazdā as the creator of all that is good in heaven and earth, Zoroastrianism postulates a cosmic dualism in which the Lord Wisdom (Av., Ahura Mazdā; Pahl., Ōhrmazd) strives against an inferior but independent adversary, the Hostile Spirit (Av., Angra Mainyu; Pahl., Ahriman). The name of the latter is found in two forms in Armenian, *Arhmn* and *Haramani*, and Armenian words for evil people and noxious creatures (e.g., *druzhan*, "betrayer"; *kakhard*, "witch"; *gazan*, "beast") are often of Iranian origin and reflect a dualistic attitude. The Zoroastrian ethical habits of cleanliness, reverence for fire and light, and steadfast cheer in the battle against evil seem to have been fully integrated into Armenian Christianity, which reveres God as *hrashap'ar* in some hymns, an epithet combining the two characteristically Mazdean features of *frasha-* ("visibly miraculous") and *khvarenah* ("divine glory") in loanwords from Middle Iranian.

Gregory the Illuminator, son of an Armenian Arsacid *nakharar* named Sūrēn Pahlav, converted King Tiridates to Christianity in the second decade of the fourth century. Armies were sent to destroy the old temples, and churches were built over the ruins. The *k'rmapet*s, or high priests, resisted with main force this military imposition of a new creed, and many Armenian *nakharar*s joined the fifth-century Sasanid king Yazdegerd II in his campaign to reconvert the Armenians to Zoroastrianism. But the iconoclastic state church of southwestern Iran differed too greatly from the old faith to appeal to many Armenians, and the translation of scripture into Armenian with the newly invented alphabet of Mesrop Mashtots' made the patriarchs and the saints "Armenian-speaking" *(hayerēnakhaws)*, as Koriwn wrote. Christianity triumphed over all but a small sect, the Arewordik' ("children of the sun"), who were said by medieval writers to follow the teachings of "the magus

Zoroaster," worshiping the sun and exposing rather than burying the dead. A very few adherents of the sect may have been alive at the time of the 1915 holocaust, when traditional Armenian society was obliterated.

[*See also* Armenian Church.]

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ARMINIUS, JACOBUS

ARMINIUS, JACOBUS (1559/60–1609), latinized name of Jacob Harmenszoon, Dutch Reformed theologian remembered chiefly for his criticisms of Calvinist views of predestination. Arminius taught that human salvation is due entirely to the grace of God in Christ, whereby fallen humankind is enabled to respond in freedom to the divine call. He proposed a universal "sufficient" grace in place of Calvin's limited "effective" grace. Further, he denied a predestination of particular persons to salvation on the basis of God's secret will, but he affirmed a particular predestination on the basis of God's foreknowledge of human free choices. For much that has come to be known as Arminianism, the central issue is "free will" versus "election."

Arminius was born to well-to-do parents in Oudewater, Holland. He lost his parents while young and was educated under the influence of Dutch biblical humanism. University studies at Marburg (1575) and Leiden (1576–1581) did not seem to have moved him to a strict Calvinism.

With support from Amsterdam merchants, he began theological studies in Geneva, where one of his teachers was Theodore Beza (1519–1605). Arminius and Beza clashed. Arminius studied for a time at Basel, but he returned to Geneva to finish his studies, after which he went to Amsterdam to become that city's first native Dutch clergyman (he was inducted into the Dutch Reformed ministry in 1588). At the time the question of predestination was raging, and Arminius came under

fire for refusing to defend any of the Calvinist options and for interpreting *Romans* 7 and *Romans* 9 in a manner different from Calvin. He was sustained in his office and position by the Amsterdam merchant-oligarchy, to which he was allied by blood and marriage.

The same humanistic laity supported him in his call to be a professor of theology in Leiden (1603), where he soon incurred the enmity of his colleague Franciscus Gomarus (1563–1641) and other ardent Calvinists. Theological issues were intertwined with political issues, the Arminians siding with the civil official Johan van Oldenbarneveldt (1547–1619), who favored a truce with Spain, and the Calvinists with the military leader Maurice of Nassau (1567–1625), who wanted to press for war. Arminius died in the midst of the conflict, in 1609.

Arminius's cause was taken up by the Remonstrants, so called from their *Remonstrance* of 1610 that presented the Arminian doctrines of salvation, but power shifted to the Calvinists and Maurice. The Synod of Dort (1618–1619) deposed the Arminians, and Oldenbarneveldt was executed. By the 1630s, however, the Remonstrants had regrouped to form a new denomination, the Remonstrant Brotherhood, which has maintained a scholarly, liberal, and progressive emphasis into the twentieth century. Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), Simon Episcopius (1583–1643), Philippus van Limborch (1633–1712), and C. P. Tiele (1830–1902) were among its noted adherents and scholars.

In England, under James I and Charles I, Anglican opponents of Calvinist Puritanism came to be known as Arminians, and Arminianism became allied with the religious and political doctrines of Archbishop William Laud (1573–1645) and was the main line of theology in the Church of England. Non-Anglican Arminianism appeared in the teachings of the General Baptists, often tending toward Unitarianism.

In the eighteenth century, however, John Wesley (1703–1791) and his brother Charles (1707–1788), by their preaching and hymnody, spread a new evangelical Arminianism throughout Britain. John Wesley, even when visiting Holland, made no common cause with the Remonstrants, who by this time were heavily influenced by the Enlightenment.

Dissent from Calvinism in New England was called "Arminianism," but it did not get its impetus from Arminius. American Methodism did, however, and John Wesley's *The Arminian Magazine* (1778) was printed on both sides of the Atlantic, as were English editions of Arminius. Wesleyan evangelical Arminianism spread with Methodism across North America in the nineteenth century to the extent that American culture has

been designated as "Arminian." There are links from this pervasive Arminian spirit to movements as diverse as frontier revivalism, communitarian perfectionism, the Holiness movement, political and theological individualism, and theological liberalism.

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CARL BANGS

ART. *For discussion of the interrelation of religion and various arts, see* Architecture; Calligraphy; Cinema and Religion; Dance; Drama; Iconography; Literature; Music; *and* Textiles; *see also* Aesthetics *and* Modern Art.

ARTEMIS. Daughter of Zeus and Leto, sister of Apollo and, like him, possessor of the bow and the lyre, Artemis assumes a double aspect. She is the huntress, the woodland wanderer, the archer who brings down wild beasts with her darts, but she is also the maiden, the pure *parthenos* destined for eternal virginity who, delighting in dance, music, and beautiful song, leads the chorus of nymphs and Graces whom she makes her companions.

There has been a great deal of discussion about the origins of Artemis. To some her name is clearly Greek, while others insist that she is a foreigner whose origin is variously described as Nordic, Oriental, Lydian, or Aegean. Her imagery in the Archaic period recalls in many respects the figure of that great Asiatic or Cretan goddess called Potnia Theron ("mistress of the animals" or "lady of the wild things"), which is precisely the title that the *Iliad* attributes to Artemis in one passage. In any case, one thing is certain: the name *Artemis* appears on the Linear B tablets of Achaean Pylos. In the twelfth century BCE, therefore, she was already present in the Greek pantheon, and if she is sometimes qualified by the ancients themselves as *xenē* ("foreign, strange"), the term refers, as in the case of Dionysos, to the strange-

ness of the goddess, to her distance with respect to the other gods, to her otherness. If the question of origins remains insoluble today, we can even so discern the features that, since the eighth century, have given Artemis her own physiognomy as an original, typically Greek divinity enjoying a place, a role, and functions in the pantheon that belong only to her.

"Let all the mountains be mine," declares Artemis in the hymn that Callimachus dedicated to her, and she specified that she would go down into town only in rare instances, should she be needed. Besides the mountains and the woods, she also frequents all the other places that the Greeks called *agros* ("country"), the uncultivated lands that, beyond the fields, mark territorial borders, the *eschatiai*. A rustic goddess *(agrotera)*, she is also referred to as Limnatis, which associates her with marshes and lagoons. She has her place at the edge of the sea, in the coastal zones between land and water where boundaries are vague; she is found, furthermore, in interior regions that have been flooded, where the land, without being altogether watery, remains wet, so that cultivation is precarious and perilous. What do these diverse regions, which belong to the goddess and where temples were erected to her, have in common? It is not that they are completely wild places, representing a radical otherness in relation to the familiar, cultivated environs of the town and the city; it is that they are borders, frontiers, regions where the wild and the cultivated brush against each other and overlap. Opposition of the savage and the civilized is implicit here, certainly, but so, quite as much, is interpenetration.

At the frontier of these two worlds, marking their boundaries and by her presence assuring their proper linking, Artemis presides over the hunt. In pursuing wild animals in order to kill them, the hunter enters the realm of savagery. But for the youth, the hunt constitutes an essential element of education, of the *paideia* that integrates him into the city. At the edge of the savage and the civilized, the hunt introduces the adolescent into the world of wild beasts. But the hunt is an activity practiced in groups; it is an art, with strict rules and restraints. Only if these social and religious norms are transgressed does the hunter range outside the human domain to become brutal like the animals he confronts. In seeing that the norms are respected, Artemis consecrates this fragile frontier.

Artemis is above all the *kourotrophos* ("rearer of the young"). She takes care of all little ones, animal and human, whether they be male or female. Her function is to nurture them until they become full-fledged adults. She guides children to the threshold of adolescence, which they must cross with her consent and assistance in order to attain complete sociality, the young woman

stepping into the role of wife and mother, and the ephebus, or youth, into that of citizen-soldier. During their growth period, before they take this leap, the young, like the goddess, occupy a liminal position, uncertain and irresolute, in which the borders that mark differences of sex, age, and species are not yet clearly fixed. In accompanying children all along their route from embryo to maturity, in establishing the rites of passage that give sanction to their departure from the margins and their integration into civil space, Artemis does not embody complete savagery; the *kourotrophos* acts in such a way as to establish an exact delimitation between boys and girls, between youths and adults, between beasts and men, and thus allows chastity and marriage, sexuality and social order, and savage life and civilized life to be properly linked. [*See also* Agōgē.]

Although Artemis is a virgin goddess who rejects any amorous contact, as Artemis Lochia she is mistress of confinements. One reason is that childbirth marks both the end of the maturation of girls, for which the goddess is responsible, and the beginning of growth of the newborn, who now come under her care. Also, childbirth introduces a note of animality into the social institution of marriage: first, in that the conjugal couple produces an offspring similar to a small animal, still alien to cultural rules, and second, in that the bond between the child and its mother is literally a natural one, not a social bond like the one that binds it to its father.

Finally, Artemis plays her part in the conduct of war. She is not a warrior goddess, however, and her interventions are not of a warlike nature. Artemis does not fight; she guides and she saves, she is Artemis Hegemone ("ruler") and Artemis Soteira ("savior"). She is invoked as rescuer in critical situations when a city is threatened with complete destruction. Artemis prepares for action when war goes beyond the civilized rules of combat and veers in the direction of savagery. In these extreme cases the goddess does not resort to physical or martial force, but uses supernatural means to upset the game. To some she brings blindness, leading them in out-of-the-way paths or clouding their minds with panic, while to others she gives a sort of hyperlucidity, guiding them miraculously through darkness or illuminating their minds with sudden inspiration.

Before launching an attack, an army sacrifices a goat to the goddess on the front line within sight of the enemy. Here again, the presence of Artemis simultaneously invokes and seeks to thrust aside the savagery of war. The slaughtered goat shares the ambiguous status of the goddess, being the wildest of all domestic animals. Its sacrifice evokes in advance the blood that must inevitably flow in the brutality of combat, but at the same time it turns the threat of bloodshed toward the enemy and diverts from one's own army the danger of a lapse into panic or murderous frenzy. At the intersection of the two camps, at the critical moment in a liminal situation, the *sphagē* (the bloody slitting of the beast's throat) represents the crossing not only of the frontier between life and death, peace and war, but also of the boundary between the civilized order—where each combatant plays the role he has been taught from childhood in the gymnasium—and the domain of chaos.

In hunting, child rearing, confinement, war and battle Artemis always performs as divinity of the margins, with the dual power to arrange the necessary crossings between savagery and civilization and to maintain strictly these same frontiers at the very moment they are violated.

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Translated from French by Alice Otis

ARTHUR, traditionally known as a sixth-century king of the Britons. Discussion of the origins of Arthur is of long standing. He is the hero or, later, the central figure of a large body of literature, much of it cyclic, in most western European languages but most especially in the medieval forms of French, German, English, and Welsh. He is consistently portrayed as a British ruler, and there is no doubt that his origins are to be sought in early Welsh sources and, to a lesser extent, in Breton and Cornish literature.

The evidence for Arthur's historical existence is meager and difficult to evaluate. Chapter 56 of the ninth-century *Historia Brittonum*, usually attributed to "Nennius," places him in the context of the first period of the attacks on Britain by the Germanic invaders, in the second half of the fifth century, and lists twelve of his famous victories. The chronicle now known as *Annales Cambriae* notes under the year 518 the Battle of Badon, as an Arthurian victory, probably the same as that which closes the Nennian list, and under 539 the Battle of Camlan, in which Arthur and Medrawd fell (Medrawd, Geoffrey of Monmouth's Modred, is the rebellious nephew of Arthur whose abduction of Guenevere led to the catastrophic final Battle of Camlan). The Nennian notes and the chronicle entries probably derive from

the same northern British source of the eighth century and are the earliest testimony to a historical Arthur. The places referred to in the list of battles cannot be securely located, and not all are to be associated with Arthur; but the list probably represents the remnant of a pre-ninth-century Welsh poem that contained a catalog of some of Arthur's traditional victories. Together with a eulogistic reference to Arthur in another Welsh poem, *Gododdin*, from northern Britain, these early allusions suggest the development of a fifth-century British leader into a popular heroic figure celebrated in song. (The *Gododdin* reference cannot be dated more securely than to the sixth to ninth century.) The British author Gildas, however, writing about 540, does not name Arthur, although he celebrates the Battle of Badon; nor do other major historical sources, such as *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* or Bede, refer to him, so that some doubt as to his historical existence must remain.

Stories of Arthur, like many other northern British heroic legends, were relocated in early medieval Wales and achieved great popularity even before the arrival of the Normans in the eleventh century opened the way for this material to become a major component in the chivalric literatures of western Europe. Welsh poems from before 1100, *mirabilia* recounted in the *Historia Brittonum*, and material in some saints' lives of the eleventh and twelfth centuries all testify to a variety of tales being told about Arthur and to the fact that the hero was beginning to attract to himself legends and heroes from other cycles. Nineteenth-century scholars attempted to interpret this material in terms of solar mythology and the mythological type of the culture hero; though this approach is discredited in view of the nature of the historical evidence, it may yet be necessary to see Arthur, if not as a mythological figure, at least as one of fictional, folkloric origins. In Nennius's *mirabilia* Arthur and his dog Cabal hunt the boar Porcum Troit, a story more fully developed in the eleventh-century Welsh tale *Culhwch and Olwen*, and stories of Arthur in this latter source have already become associated with topographical features. Poems in the *Black Book of Carmarthen* and the *Book of Taliesin*, both from the thirteenth century, portray Arthur as the leader of a band of renowned warriors, Cei and Bedwyr foremost among them, who fight with monsters, hags, and giants and who carry out a disastrous expedition against the otherworld to free a prisoner. The twelfth-century *Life of Saint Gildas* contains the story of the abduction of Arthur's wife by Melwas and her imprisonment in the Glass Island, euhemerized as Glastonbury. These are the elements, together with some personal names, which seem to represent the earliest stratum of the Arthurian

legend and which reappear in contemporary terms throughout its later forms.

There is more than one tradition of Arthur's end besides that of his death at Camlan. One that is attested early is his removal to the Isle of Avalon to be healed of his wounds and to await the call to return. At the end of the twelfth century the monks of Glastonbury claimed to have discovered the graves of Arthur and his wife at their abbey, but this seems never to have found popular acceptance. Arthur's role as the awaited hero remained a political force throughout the Middle Ages among the Celtic peoples of Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany. The later stages of his legend as the chivalrous king who was head of the Round Table and instigator of the search for the Holy Grail belong to the realm of literary history.

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (commonly designated AI) is generally understood as the field of research concerned with the design of machines capable of doing things that would exhibit intelligence if done by human beings. Frequently cited examples are computer systems capable of playing expert checkers and chess, of proving logical and mathematical theorems, of recognizing visual and auditory patterns, and of answering questions on texts presented in conversational language.

A feature of most commonly recognized AI systems is that they employ flexible trial and error procedures (heuristics) enabling a computer to solve problems not anticipated in detail by its human programmers. AI thus is generally distinguished from the study and use of other large-scale computerized systems whose operations under all contingencies are fully detailed by their designers, such as those currently used for many com-

mercial, military, and scientific purposes (e.g., inventory control, weapons guidance, and video image enhancement). AI also is usually distinguished from computer techniques aimed primarily at the augmentation of human intelligence, such as programs for the routine compilation of statistical data and for the solution of complex mathematical equations.

Goals of Research. AI emerged as a distinct field of research in the 1950s, under the combined influence of communication theory, cybernetics, and the theory of computation. By the early 1980s it had developed close connections with cognitive psychology and philosophy of mind as well. This diversity of interests is reflected in diverse conceptions of its aims and procedures. Most AI research to date, nonetheless, has been aimed at simulating human intelligence (i.e, at producing an output similar to that of human intelligence in response to a given set of input conditions) with little effort to duplicate the actual processes employed by the human nervous system.

One rationale for this emphasis on simulation is the need for performance criteria applicable in evaluating the success of a given research effort. Following an early suggestion by A. M. Turing, researchers customarily judge an AI system to be successful to the extent that its performance in relevant circumstances is indistinguishable from that of a human organism. Success in a given research effort thus comes to be viewed as tantamount to successful simulation. A second rationale is our inadequate understanding at present of how the human organism achieves even the simplest of its intelligent activities. In view of the current limits of our psychological and neurophysiological knowledge, simulation is the only reasonable short-term goal of AI research.

At the same time, scholars of AI often acknowledge as a long-term goal the development of a comprehensive explanatory theory of human mental activity. In this more farsighted perspective, individual simulation attempts may be viewed as experiments testing a general conception (sometimes called a "model") of the type of mental activity in question. According to one currently prominent conception of mentality, for example, all human cognition incorporates procedures of the sort enacted by an automatic formal system (i.e., a general purpose computer). Guided by this model, an attempt to simulate a specific type of mental activity would aim at devising a set of computational procedures that would approximate the desired output under the appropriate input conditions. A careful evaluation of the results might lead to an improved understanding of how this type of activity can be performed by computational procedures, and thus to a better simulation of the activity in question. Alternatively, it might lead to a rejection of the computational model in favor of one leading to results more faithful to actual human performance. In either event, the desired result of a series of such simulation attempts would be a more complete conception of how mental performance of that type might be achieved, capable ultimately of being integrated into a comprehensive explanatory theory of human intelligence.

Given a sufficiently comprehensive explanation of how the human mind operates, along with sufficiently sophisticated technology, researchers should be able to design a mechanical system capable of duplicating (or even improving upon) most forms of intelligent activity we now consider typical of the human organism. We may refer to such a system as a "genuinely intelligent artifact." Conversely, given the existence of a genuinely intelligent artifact, we (or its designers) may be presumed to possess a comprehensive theory of how the human mind operates. The long-range goal of developing a comprehensive theory of human mental activity, accordingly, may be viewed as tantamount to that of designing a genuinely intelligent artifact. It is with reference to this long-range goal that AI as a field of research has most significance for our understanding of the human intellect and, in particular, has significance for our religious thinking.

Prognosis for Development of a Genuinely Intelligent Artifact. Currently existing AI systems fall short of human performance in several basic respects. One is that they are highly specialized. A typical chess-playing program, for example, will have no capacity for playing checkers or recognizing speech, and a text-comprehending system will be incapable of mathematical reasoning. Another is that the input to most current AI systems requires preparation by a human user in a technical, symbolic format (video tube display, keyboard, etc.) and that their output is symbolic in a similar fashion. As a result, any system's intelligence is exhibited only in a context that has itself been intelligently contrived, involving relatively little interaction with a nonsymbolic perceptual or behavioral environment. Yet another is that a system's performance typically is instigated according to the desires and interests of its human users, not to those (as in the human case) of the intelligent performer itself. For these reasons, if no other, current AI systems fail to qualify as genuinely intelligent artifacts.

Nonetheless, several developments indicate tentatively that a comprehensive theory of mentality capable of supporting the design of such an artifact might even-

tually be achieved. One is the limited but still striking success of current AI research efforts, notably in playing games and proving theorems, which shows that some intelligent activities at least can be accomplished in a manner subject to detailed explanation. It is reasonable to assume that other forms of mentality will prove likewise explanable. A second indication is the notable success of recent neurophysiology in identifying the brain mechanisms apparently responsible for mental phenomena as diverse as perceptual pattern recognition, speech, visual memory, pain and pleasure, and mental alertness generally. Although identification of such mechanisms does not amount to an explanation of how they operate, it is a substantial step in that direction. [*See* Neuroepistemology.]

A third indication that a theory of mentality capable of yielding a genuinely intelligent artifact might eventually be achieved is the exploration currently under way of a number of provisional theories with that end explicitly in view. Most prominent among these is the computational (or "information-processing") account of cognitive processes previously mentioned. Two basic assumptions of this approach are (1) that all forms of cognition are accomplished by computational operations upon internal symbolic representations and (2) that such representations themselves can bear semantic relationships (truth and reference) to the world at large. Both assumptions have been vigorously challenged in recent literature, and it seems unlikely on balance that this approach will prevail without significant changes in its underlying conception of the nature of mental activity.

An alternative approach begins at a more fundamental level with the concept of information provided by mathematical communication theory, and attempts to derive an account of semantic relationships in terms of (nonsemantic) information processing in this more technical sense. This theory treats all self-conscious forms of mentality as having evolved from less complex forms of information processing during the course of species evolution, and as having been selected for the versatility and efficiency of the coupling they provide between the organism and its living environment. Among the considerable problems facing this approach are our currently poor grasp of what exactly it is about higher mental capacities that requires explaining (self-awareness, objective reference, conceptual categorization?) and the sheer mass of biological and psychological knowledge that must be mastered to provide an adequate account of how these capacities evolved.

Although general theories of this character are still far from adequate, they show that a comprehensive account of mentality capable of supporting the design of a genuinely intelligent artifact is a feasible goal to pursue.

On the basis of these several indications, it seems reasonable to anticipate that an artifact of this description might eventually be created. Lacking at present a precise conception of what is involved in human intelligence, we should at least recognize that we have no adequate basis (scientific, philosophic, or religious) for rejecting the possibility of such an artifact.

Challenges to Traditional Conceptions of Mentality. Modern Western thought has generally assumed an ontological distinction (difference in kind of being) between the mental and the physical. Major ontological viewpoints have been confined to the familiar trio of physicalism, mentalism, and dualism, maintaining respectively that being is irreducibly physical, or mental, or both. The possibility of a genuinely intelligent artifact does not fit easily within this traditional set of alternatives. In maintaining that both the mental and the physical are irreducible, dualism holds in effect that these two modes of being cannot be accommodated within a single explanatory framework. The existence of a general theory supporting the creation of a mentally endowed physical artifact, accordingly, would count against the dualistic alternative. The creation of a mentally endowed artifact out of physical components would count against mentalism in turn, with its central tenet that the mental cannot be constituted out of any other substance. The implications for physicalism, however, are not so clear, because they depend upon the character of the general theory in question.

If the theory supporting the creation of a genuinely intelligent artifact were derived exclusively from physical science, then physicalism would be at least partially vindicated, inasmuch as one of its key tenets is precisely that such a theory is possible. Given the present direction of AI research, however, there is reason to believe that an adequate theory of mentality, if ever achieved, will require conceptual resources beyond those available in the physical sciences alone. If the computational approach to cognitive theory continues to prevail, then the final theory will incorporate principles of computability as well, which rely upon the disciplines of mathematics and logic. If our theoretical understanding of mentality proves finally to rely upon the basic concepts of technical communication theory, on the other hand, then once again the resources of mathematics will be required. Since mathematics is not a physical science, the success of either the computational or the communication-theoretic approach will count against the key tenet of physicalism to the effect that an adequate account of mentality can be based ultimately upon physics alone. At present there is no alternative

approach that shows promise of generating an adequate account of mental processes within the bounds set by traditional physicalism strictly understood.

An option beyond the traditional trio of physicalism, mentalism, and dualism, known as "neutral monism," gives ontological precedence to a single substance or principle out of which both mind and matter can be constituted as less ultimate modes of being. One form of neutral monism proposed earlier in this century by Bertrand Russell maintained that mind and matter (the mental and the physical) are differently organized structures of ontologically basic sensibilia (unsensed objects of potential awareness). The central role of mathematical models in current AI research suggests that a mature theory of mind might support yet another version of neutral monism, in which mathematical formulations (e.g., probability functions) have ontological priority over the theoretical entities of both psychology and physics. Such a theory would fulfill the ancient vision of Pythagoras and Plato, who conceived mathematical principles as constitutive of the natural universe.

It should be noted that the creation of a genuinely intelligent artifact along lines currently envisaged would not support the doctrine of physical determinism. Physical determinism, as opposed to theological determinism, is the speculative thesis that all events in the universe, mental included, result necessarily from the occurrence of antecedent physical causes. The specter of physical determinism was raised in the nineteenth century by the theoretical ideal of a complete explanation of all events in the universe according to deterministic physical laws. Since there is reason to believe that no adequate theory of mentality will ever be developed solely on the basis of the causal laws of physics (exclusive of mathematical or logical models such as the communication channel or the Turing machine), there are no grounds for the conjecture that a genuinely intelligent artifact would lend support to this dated theoretical ideal.

Religious Significance. Many students of AI at present are committed physicalists, and they tend as a matter of course to view the long-range project of designing a genuinely intelligent artifact as one promising vindication of their ontological position. Since physicalists typically consider religious thought to be either false or cognitively vacuous, success in this project for them would have little or no additional religious significance. For reasons suggested above regarding the central role of mathematics in any mature theory of human mentality, however, there is another view of the long-range AI goal that encourages a higher estimate of its religious significance. A more likely prospect, according to this view, is that the presence in our midst of a genuinely

intelligent artifact would stimulate debate of, and perhaps help clarify, a number of basic religious issues.

Perforce there would be questions of a practical nature, legal and ethical as well as religious: could an artifact enter contracts, or be morally responsible; should it be proselytized, catechized, or offered sacraments? These in turn would raise questions of a conceptual nature, which ultimately would have more impact upon our religious thinking.

One set of concepts that would require reexamination regards the features that a human being is thought to share with divinity. Although the concept of mind is often equated with a concept of soul or spirit, most religious thinkers presumably would find it obvious that the expressions *immortal soul* and *incarnate spirit* cannot refer to entities of a sort that can be created artificially. One result for our religious thinking might be a motivation to distinguish "mind" more sharply from "soul" and "spirit."

Particularly problematic would be the notion of mind or intellect as the feature that makes a person unique, both in distinction from other persons and as candidate for continued personal existence after bodily death. If a particular mind is a particular organization of (biological, mechanical, or perhaps "neutral") components, what is to prevent the creation of yet another system possessing an identical organization? And if that is possible, how could the mind of a particular individual be the feature by which that person is uniquely identified?

A related problem in traditional religious thought is that of bodily resurrection, intensified by the scientific discovery that different bodies may share the same bits of matter at different points in the biological food chain. This problem arises under any view, like mind-body dualism, that assumes matter to be ontologically irreducible. If neutral monism is correct in maintaining the ontologically composite character of mind and matter alike, however, the problem would be more easily resolvable, for the material parts shared at different times by different bodies might be identical in (physical) organization but constituted of different (neutral) elements. Thus a possible solution to the problem of personal identity might be to conceive a particular person as a unique combination of both mental and physical structures, either aspect of which might be separately reproduced in different biological or mechanical individuals. Bodily resurrection of a given person might then be conceived as a state in which structures of both sorts somehow are reconstituted and rejoined after death of the original, organically developed body.

Another salutary possibility opened up by an ontology of neutral monism is an understanding of our self-consciousness and of our awareness of external objects

that suggests how both could occur in a nonphysical state of existence. The basis of this presently quite speculative possibility is that mathematical entities themselves are neither spatial nor temporal and that they are capable of being organized in nonphysical structures (geometrical systems, number series, etc.). If self-consciousness and other forms of awareness could be understood completely on the basis of the mathematical concept of information, in accord with the long-range goal of the communication-theoretic approach to mentality mentioned previously, the results should include a coherent conception of how consciousness might exist in nonphysical systems. Properly augmented by the resources of appropriate religious traditions, such an account might help explicate certain aspects of the doctrine of *nirvāṇa* (disciplined achievement of omniscient awareness without further reincarnation) and add intelligibility to accounts of mystical experience (unity with God transcending personal awareness).

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ARTS, CRAFTS, AND RELIGION. [*This entry provides a cross-cultural survey of the religious valorization of certain arts and handicrafts. For discussion of specific arts, see* Architecture; Dance; Drama; Iconography; Literature; *and* Music.]

In the Hindu villages of India, each morning the man of the house washes his face in the early rays of the rising sun and recites the supreme prayer, Gāyatrī (lit., "savior of the singer"): "We meditate upon that adorable effulgence of the resplendent vivifier the Sun; may he stimulate our intellects." Meanwhile the household women perform their worship by drawing a *maṇḍala* on the ground immediately in front of the doorway. With different colored chalks they trace from memory circuitous patterns whose meanings have long since been obscured by time. This design leads to the center of mystical cognition, just as surely as the words of the Gāyatrī. Both ensure the safety of the day by promising the renewal of the sunrise tomorrow. By noon, footsteps have scuffed the chalk picture into the threshold's dust. This ritual has been repeated for some three thousand years now, as long as the Vedas, the Hindu sacred writings, have been on earth.

Around thirty thousand years ago, man created earth's first example of art. Deep in the limestone caves of what is now France and Spain, Cro-Magnon *Homo sapiens* of the Upper Paleolithic period used a few strokes to make portraits of animals: wounded or sleeping bison, bulls, reindeer, and horses. Far from any source of natural light and distant from his living quarters, primitive man painted these red, black, and ochre sketches as part of religious ceremony. By drawing what was so essential to life—the animals that were his food—he was making certain, through sympathetic magic, his continuing survival.

The above examples, one from prehistoric times and the other as recent as today, suggest the scope of the connection between art and spiritual practice. By combining the mystery of prayer with the miracle of graphic depiction man came to terms with his environment. This was his attempt to control the uncontrollable, to confront the superior forces of nature. His imagination created a divine world within the real world and by picturing it either specifically or abstractly in art validated its reality beyond any tangible actuality. In this way man himself approached divinity. If he could draw a bison, mimetically imitate it in a primitive performance, or later invent a mystical layout of the whole cosmos (such as is represented by a *maṇḍala*), then he too was a creator, if not the Creator, and so could become comfortable within turbulent surroundings.

Valorized by the information that belief conveyed, and stirred by the emotion that art communicated, man embellished himself and his world. In prehistory the urge for decoration already took precedence over more utilitarian applications of resources and skills. With barely sufficient stone implements for the kill or for cultivation of the soil, man first used iron ore for pigments to paint his body and dye his hair. Copper was hammered into necklace beads before it served for cooking utensils. Alloys and welding and even the earliest lathe were developed for jewelry making. The wheel, as can be seen from archaeological discoveries, was invented first for toys and only later used for transportation.

As history unfolded nothing escaped either theology or the passion of art. The useful and the decorative, the permanent and the perishable, existed side by side. Made to endure eternally were pyramidal tombs that joined man and his gods; made for more immediate purposes were sand paintings done in the flickering of a moment and bonfires of divine effigies elaborately constructed only to be consigned to smoke drifting up to the sky. Artifacts and handicrafts were swept into the arms of God; all things became holy. Labor itself was sanctified. Employing metaphors drawn from the work of craftsmen, a sage of the Upaniṣads says, "Out of the cotton of compassion, spin the thread of contentment. . . . In the forge of continence, let patience be the goldsmith. On the anvil of understanding, let him strike with the hammer of knowledge. Let fear of God be the bellows." In the Vedantic commentary on the holy books of India, the sage says, "One gold but various ornaments; the one clay but many forms and shapes; the one ocean into which all rivers flow."

Kabīr, the weaver of Banaras who was India's supreme poet in the fifteenth century, sang: "The barber has sought God, the washerman and the carpenter. . . ." Similarly, his contemporary, Raidās, the poet-slave before whom even brahmans prostrated themselves, proclaimed, "O people of the city! Everyone knows I am a cobbler by trade and a tanner by caste, and yet within my heart I meditate upon God." On the unclean leather of his pounded hides he tooled images of Rāma and Sītā. "How is there likeness and difference?" he asked, and answered, "Likeness or difference as between gold and a bracelet made of it." He went on to argue that wine is made from palms, so palm leaves are impure. Yet if holy scriptures are written on palm leaves, men worship the leaves; "If wine is made of the holy water of the Ganges, you holy men will not drink it. But if that wine is poured into the Ganges, the river remains holy" (Raghaven, 1966).

In today's India the lowly potter holds a high place in the Hindu sacrament of marriage. His trade supplies the basic needs of rural life, as his craft is divided between the making of utensils and the fashioning of votive objects used for ceremonies. A pilgrimage to pay homage to the potter's wheel is essential to every wedding day, after the bridegroom has brought the bride into his house. The women of the household sing and chant, touching their foreheads to the wheel, while the bride and groom stand on either side. The potter, holding wet clay in his hands, makes a lingam, a phallic symbol of creativity, and dips it into the pot spinning between them.

Worship of tools has long been commonplace in Hinduism and its Buddhist extensions. A craftsman sets about his day's labor with ablutions and devotions. In modern, metropolitan India and its cultural colonies throughout Southeast Asia, few taxi drivers turn the ignition key in their cars without first touching their forehead to the steering wheel.

In the Western world it is proverbial that the devil finds work for idle hands or minds. As priests and monks endlessly reiterate mystic syllables or scriptural lessons, reaching salvation through repetition regardless of word-by-word understanding, so workers connect themselves to God through the sheer busyness of their hands. The rote "doing" in itself produces spiritual efficacy.

Handicrafts can become metaphors for the relentless seesawing between the outer, perceptible world and an inner, invisible one. In making Indian needlework, seamstresses nearly blind themselves as if in penance by sewing thousands of Kṛṣṇa faces on the border of a sari. Among the Muslims in Kashmir a single shawl requires a million stitches patterning over and over again the Hand of Fāṭimah, the Prophet's daughter. Japanese women who are expert in the art of origami make hundreds of paper cranes that are strung on the branches of pine trees to ensure longevity. The pine tree itself has sacred significance. Its wood, polished and lacquered, forms the scenic backdrop for all nō theater, the stage's kambashira ("god-pillar") past which actors move and down through which gods descend to bless the spectators witnessing the message of the drama's sacramental words.

To a large extent China has renounced its religiosity and turned secular. Nevertheless, Chinese calligraphers still write the word for "good luck" in countless different writing styles and configurations, for discipline in their craft and the favor of now abandoned gods. However, in the art of jade, scholars and artists, while frowning on Taoism and Buddhism, reject Confucian eschewal of divinity.

In jade, modern Chinese continue to find God. Jade is called "the stone of heaven," because it is pure, lustrous, mysteriously colored, and—no more native to China than the Buddha himself—comes from far away. Moreover, like gold, it endures for all eternity. Working in jade is "the divine craft." Jade is harder than many metals and can only be drilled, not carved, yet when it is uncovered it looks as soft as wax. Like "eggs laid by the Cosmos," the Chinese say, jade comes in boulders covered in a skin of ugly, brown, rough rock. Like man himself, it needs work in order to release the angel within. Finished pieces of jade are graded, the highest rank being shen-p'in ("god piece"); fine examples of craftmanship are elevated on specially carved stands, so as to be "nearer to heaven on high." [See also Jade.]

The artisan's skill consists in finding the indwelling spirit within each chunk of jade. In the same way that primitive man submitted to a cave wall's natural contour and obeyed its already manifest pattern when drawing, say, an animal's flank or a human thigh, so too does this Chinese craftsman listen to "the voice of the jewel." His goal is not to represent a particular thing at a specific time but to capture, for example, "the horseness of the horse." One famous story from Chinese history illustrates the stone's power over its masters. An emperor presented with a precious block of jade asked the court craftsman to sculpt it into "dragon and clouds," a traditional pairing like "mountains and water" in painting. In time the artist returned with three little fish and a few grains of jade dust, all that was left from his labor. There had been "neither dragon nor clouds within it," he explained, and the emperor deferred.

In jadework, as in all arts, it is detail that exalts an object and enraptures the observer. Michelangelo taught his pupils that "art is a matter of trifles, but art is no trifle." In Asia, under the influence of Zen, and particularly in Japan, the cult of detail assumed paramountcy in art, in religion, and in daily life. In one Zen question, or *kōan*, the head of the house is asked, "How did you arrange the guest's shoes when he arrived at the door?" If the adept can answer, he knows everything and has reached enlightenment. *Satori* is as much in the perception of minute detail as it is in the thundering truths of the eternal verities. The Buddha dwells equally in both. Transcendental understanding can come as unexpectedly to the laborer as to the saint and is as possible within the heart as within the intellect. It can be reached through ordinary physical routine—sweeping the garden, cooking with the bowl of blessedness, releasing an arrow from a bow, or placing a visitor's shoes in such a way that he can slip into them easily when he leaves the house.

In Asia even sports are dedicated to the service of God. "Worship God with a stick and a ball in time of pestilence," goes an ancient Indian and Persian maxim, reflecting cultures in which hockey and polo were sports of preference. Nowadays, gymnasts of the Zour Khaneh in Teheran exercise to musical prayers dedicated to ʿAlī, vice-regent and son-in-law of Muḥammad and prophet of Shiism. Here ritual sport has been elevated into an art, almost that of the dance, as the gymnasts swing their Indian clubs, planks of wood, and shields and chains of heaviest metal, make swimming movements in the air, or undulate on the ground in imitation of the waves of the sea. These athletics are punctuated throughout by drum rolls, pauses for moments of com-

posure, and communal acts of worship. [*See also* Games.]

Zarathushtra proclaimed strength and combat to be "heavenly virtues." Athletes obey an elaborate code of chivalry *(aryary)* and as "acrobats of God" strive to become sacred *pahlevan* ("knights of strength"). Gymnasiums all over Iran are domed like dervish monasteries. The training within is designed "to thrash out easy pleasure" and "to establish an arrangement with heaven." Levity and coarseness are forbidden. Prayer-exercises precede each workout in order to make "muscles as hard as bronze" and "hearts humble as dirt." "Man is dust and will return to dust," chants the *morched* ("master of the bell and drum"), as the athlete-knights writhe on their stomachs. Herodotus in the fifth century BCE described these early Persians: "From the fifth to their twenty-fifth year of age these athletes are taught only three things—horsemanship, archery, and the importance of telling the truth." Telling the truth meant then as it does today the defense and propagation of religion as the highest praise of God.

Literature and poetry have in the past been synonymous with religion as we can see from tract and treatise, *sūtra* and psalm. Painting and sculpture have recorded the history of man performing his devotions. Millions upon millions of icons and images, portraits and pictures—representations of Christ, the Buddha, Śiva and Pārvatī, Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā, Rāma and Sītā—have been painted, drawn, chiseled, carved, etched, and tattooed, in the course of centuries. The variety of these images is overwhelming, ranging as they do from body decorations to giant bronzes, from prayers delicately handpainted in the lining of clothing to huge statues capping stone mountains. However, it is probably in the theater of dance and drama as it has developed in Asia that religious origins are most strikingly linked to art.

World drama and dance have their origins in religious rites. Western tragedy and comedy were born of Dionysian festivals in Greece. In the fifth century, however, Augustine severed dance from its religious connections, despite the fact that, as reported in the *Gospel of Thomas*, Christ danced at the Last Supper and the Psalms were originally performed as well as sung. Augustine decreed that "it is better to work in the fields than to dance in them." Likewise, a thousand years earlier in China, Confucius had warned his people that "the Superior Man keeps a distance from the Spirits." Despite these severances of drama and dance from religion, examples of an original and lasting bond abound. The *Ṛgveda*, the oldest Indian religious text, contains hymns and dialogues from which all subsequent Indian theater derives. In the *Frog Hymn*, recited to invoke

rain, men dressed as frogs leap about while singing and dancing in antiphonal dialogue. The *Gambler's Hymn* is another example where performers imitate the tossing of the dice and thereby elicit good fortune or safety within chance. In speaking of Asian art it is difficult to use separate terms for dance and drama. The arts are fused: dance is unthinkable without story, and drama would lose its audiences without generous admixtures of dance. The Sanskrit word *nāṭya* refers either to dance or to drama. The character for the Japanese art of *kabuki* is written so as to mean the amalgam "song-dance-skill." Throughout the East, music, poetry, movement, and plot intertwine and include the lesser arts of acrobatics, mimicry, stage decor, and staging devices.

According to Hindu beliefs, each evening Śiva, the Creator and Destroyer, dances with his son Gaṇeśa on the peak on Mount Kailas in the Himalayas. Śiva by another name is Nāṭarāja, the Lord Dancer or King of Dancers. His movement created the world when he set its first vibration in motion. In Śaiva temples he is represented both in static form as the stone lingam and in dynamic form as the dancer. Bronze statues show him in the act of dancing, stamping out evil with one foot, the river Ganges flowing from his hair, a tiny drum in his upper hand. The French sculptor Auguste Rodin thought that the statuary format that depicts Śiva as Nāṭarāja was "the highest sculptural concept of body movement known to the world."

The King of Dancers dances on every occasion in Hindu life: to celebrate victory over evil, to reassure mortals of the ever-renewing momentum of the universe, and even when bored in his heaven. Once, to curb his wife Mohini's pride in her own dancing, he held a contest with her in which he demonstrated all the most complicated steps, each of which she executed to perfection. At last, exasperated, he immodestly extended his leg straight up in the air perpendicular to his body. Modesty forbade her to follow that movement, and Śiva retained his crown.

Dance programs in India then as now began with an invocation and ended with a prayer; even contemporary secular avant-garde experiments draw on religious techniques for inspiration and content. The dance of India's quondam satellites in Southeast Asia, notably Thailand and Indonesia, also sustains this ancient provenance. Despite their overlay of Buddhism and Islam, Thai and Indonesian dance dramas repeat the Hindu legends—the abduction of Sītā, the quelling of iniquity by Arjuna, and the monkey wars. Unlike the West, where man is created in God's likeness, in Asia the gods are expressive of man in all their guises of weakness and strength; and it is this core of recogniz-

able humanity that makes them universal. These plays are as appealing to the saint as to the sinner, as sympathetic to the seeker as to the finder.

In Japan the origin of dance theater is mythological, rooted in the earliest times when earth and heaven were inhabited by "eight myriad deities." Japan's oldest history, the *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters), written down in 712 CE but reflecting oral history preserved from a thousand years earlier, describes that country's first theatrical performance. Amaterasu Ōmikami, central deity of Shintō and ancestor of the imperial dynasty, has been offended by the teasing playfulness of her brother. She sulkily hides herself in a cave and seals the entrance with a rock. One of the lesser deities, Ame no Uzume no Mikoto, devises a way to lure her into showing her face again and return the world to sunshine.

Garbing herself elaborately, Ame no Uzume places a sounding board (an inverted wooden tub) outside the cave, stamps on it until it loudly resounds, and "as if possessed, pulls on her nipples and pushes down her skirt below her private parts." The gods laugh, and the racket piques the curiosity of the sun goddess, who peers out from behind the rock. She is appeased. Ame no Uzume then says to her, "We rejoice and are glad because there is a deity more illustrious than Thine Augustness." This is one of the most obscure lines in Japanese theology: scholars have not yet determined who the "more illustrious deity" is. Perhaps it is a reference to the all-powerful art of dance and drama, including its erotic overtones.

From that beginning Japan developed into the world's greatest treasury of theatrical arts; in no other country is theater so rich or flourishing. Today in Japan you can see *bugaku* dances that were imported more than a thousand years ago from China and India and are now extinct in their countries of origin. Temple friezes and desert cave bas-reliefs showing the strange musical instruments and the odd poses and posturings of the dancers attest to *bugaku*'s present-day authenticity. *Nō* plays are still attended by audiences as respectful and devout as the nobles for whom the plays were originally written and performed seven hundred years ago. Japan's chief popular entertainment, which is now four hundred years old, is *kabuki*. Equivalent to the plays of Shakespeare in magnificence of poetry, plot, costume, scenery, and performance, *kabuki* continues to bring delight to audiences at home and honor for its artists abroad. In addition, Japan boasts a variety of contemporary theaters and dance forms, ranging from comedies, musicals, and translations from the West, to dazzling experiments and innovations.

From its inception art has served religion well: it has given people pleasure and instilled in them the highest values and virtues. The specific purpose connecting religion and art has dissipated over the centuries. In the West, modern theater has come to serve even antitheistic aims. However, in the East, for all the encroachment of materialism, a close relation between God and man is still upheld. Asians are not yet ready to relinquish the spirituality inherent within their arts. For the present and for a long time to come, it seems difficult to isolate art from religion, and impossible to remove religion from the arts and crafts to which it gave birth.

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FAUBION BOWERS

ARVAL BROTHERS. The college of Arval Brothers (Collegium Fratrum Arvalium), a Roman religious fraternity of great antiquity, was restored in about 28 BCE by the future emperor Augustus. It is known from a few references in literary works and, chiefly, from a famous collection of about 240 fragments of official records on marble that represent fifty-five different years and cover the period from 21 BCE to 241 or even 304 CE.

Usually numbering twelve and presided over by an annually elected leader *(magister)* with a *flamen* (priest, i.e., one of the brothers) to assist him, the Arval Brothers met in Rome or in the sacred grove of the goddess Dia. [*See* Flamen.] In Rome, depending more or less on the sovereign, the college took part in regular public worship (*vota*, votive sacrifices on the occasion of political or dynastic events). The brothers also celebrated rites connected with their own liturgy, a liturgy that

culminated in the festival of the goddess Dia. [*See* Dea Dia.] This festival was a movable one, and during the first part of January the brotherhood determined the days of the festival for that year. It was usually celebrated on 17, 19, and 20 May if the year was an odd-numbered one and on 27, 29, and 30 May if the year was even-numbered.

The festival of the goddess Dia lasted three days. The first day was celebrated in Rome, in the house of the president of the brotherhood, and consisted of a banquet eaten in the presence of the goddess during which the priests passed from hand to hand dried and green ears of grain as well as loaves of bread crowned with laurel.

On the second day the brotherhood went to the sacred grove of the goddess Dia at the fifth milestone on the Via Campana, on the boundary of the *ager Romanus antiquus* ("ancient Roman soil"), where her shrine stood next to a temple to Fors Fortuna. Here, in the morning, the president offered Dia two sacrifices: young sows in expiation of possible faults and a cow to do her honor. The brothers then ate a sacrificial meal. Afterward they donned the wreaths made from ears of grain that were their mark and at midday entered the shrine of Dia. In front of and inside the shrine they performed a second, complex series of rites that is still obscure to us in many respects. First they sacrificed a ewe lamb to Dia; then they once again passed the dried and green ears of grain from hand to hand and offered a meal to the "mother of the *lares*" by throwing down in front of the temple *ollae* (vessels of sundried clay) that contained a grain porridge. Then, behind closed doors, the priests performed a solemn dance *(tripudium)* and sang the famous *Carmen Arvale*, a hymn of great antiquity that is known to us from an inscription of 218 CE. A sacrificial banquet, chariot races, and another banquet in Rome concluded the second day. On the third day the Arval Brothers held a further banquet in the home of their president and handed around the ears of grain one last time.

The rites of the festival were addressed to Dia, goddess of "the sunlit sky"; she was asked to favor the proper ripening of the grain, symbolized in the rite by the continuity between green grain and grain that had become fully ripe. The *Carmen Arvale*, on the other hand, was addressed to Mars as defender of landed property and of the *ager Romanus*. A possibly late interpretation connects the Arval Brothers with Acca Larentia, the supposed nurse of Romulus and Remus, and thus associates them with the story of Romulus; this is consistent with the hypothesis that the Arval rites go back to the end of the period of the kings (sixth century BCE).

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JOHN SCHEID
Translated from French by Matthew J. O'Connell

ĀRYADEVA, often called simply Deva (Tib., 'Phags-pa-lha); an important Buddhist dialectician, linked with several other names such as Kāṇadeva, Nīlanetra, Piṅgalanetra, Piṅgalacakṣuḥ, and Karṇaripa, although the identification with some of these is doubtful. In China, he is known both by the transcription of his name, T'i-po or T'i-po-lo (Jpn., Daiba or Daibara), and by the translation of his name, Cheng-t'ien (Jpn., Shōten).

Scholars have identified at least two Āryadevas. The first, who will be referred to as "Āryadeva I," was a Madhyamaka (Mādhyamika) dialectician, the most eminent disciple of Nāgārjuna, who lived between the third and fourth centuries CE. The second, "Āryadeva II," was a Tantric master whose date has been variously proposed as in the seventh to tenth centuries (most probably at the beginning of the eighth century), because he cites the *Madhyamakahṛdayakārikā* of Bhāvaviveka (500–570) and the *Tarkajvālā,* its autocommentary, in his *Madhyamakabhramaghāta,* and because verse 31 of his *Jñānasārasamuccaya* is cited in the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā* of Kamalaśīla (740–795).

Biographies are available in Chinese sources (T.D. no. 2048; see also T.D. no. 2058, chap. 6), in Tibetan materials (Bu-ston, Tāranātha, etc.), and partially but most genuinely in Sanskrit documents (Candrakīrti's *Catuḥśatakaṭīkā,* the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa,* etc.). If the Chinese sources are concerned solely with Āryadeva I, the Tibetan ones in general combine and do not adequately distinguish between the two Āryadevas. Both traditions confuse history and legend, and now it is almost impossible to separate them. However, if one singles out only the most plausible elements, the two individuals can be described as follows. Āryadeva I was born in Sri Lanka (Sinhaladvīpa) as the son of a king but abandoned his glorious career and went to South India. After traveling throughout India, he met Nāgārjuna at Pāṭaliputra and

became his disciple. He showed his talent in debate and converted many Brahmanic adherents to Buddhism. He is called Kāṇadeva ("One-eyed Deva") because he offered his eye to a non-Buddhist woman (according to Tāranātha), to a tree goddess (according to Bu-ston), to a woman (according to the *Caturaśīti-siddha-pavṛtti,* or *Biography of the Eighty-four Siddhas*), or to a golden statue of Maheśvara (according to the Chinese sources).

Āryadeva II studied alchemy at Nālandā under the Tantric Nāgārjuna, who was a disciple of Saraha and founder of the 'Phags-lugs lineage of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra.* The story of offering one eye is related about him also, but this might be an interpolation from the biography of Āryadeva I.

All of the texts ascribed to Āryadeva in the Chinese canon and most of the texts so ascribed in the Madhyamaka section of the Tibetan canon can be considered as the works of Āryadeva I. The most famous is his *Catuḥśataka* (Derge edition of the Tibetan Tripiṭaka 3846, hereafter cited as D.; Peking edition of the Tripiṭaka 5246, hereafter cited as P.; T.D. no. 1570 [the second half only], see also T.D. no. 1517), which consists of sixteen chapters, the first eight being concerned with the preparation of those who practice the path and the last eight explaining the insubstantiality of all *dharma*s. The *Śatakaśāstra,* a so-called abridged version of the *Catuḥśataka* available only in Kumārajīva's translation (T.D. no. 1569), and the *Akṣaraśataka* (T.D. no. 1572), said to be composed by Nāgārjuna in Tibetan versions (D. 3834, P. 5234), are especially noteworthy as the works of Āryadeva I.

On the other hand, all the works ascribed to Āryadeva in the Tantric section of the Tibetan canon are unquestionably attributed to Āryadeva II. The most important and well-known texts among them are the *Cittaviśuddhiprakaraṇa* (D. 1804, P. 2669), a Sanskrit version of which was edited by P. B. Patel (Calcutta, 1949); the *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa* (D. 1803, P. 2668); and the *Pradīpoddyotana-nāma-ṭīkā* (D. 1794, P. 2659). There are also some texts in the Madhyamaka section of the Tibetan canon that can, on the basis of their contents, be attributed to Āryadeva II: the *Madhyamakabhramaghāta* (D. 3850, P. 5250), most of which simply consists of extracts from the *Madhyamakahṛdaya* and the *Tarkajvālā* of Bhāvaviveka; the *Jñānasārasamuccaya* (D. 3851, P. 5251), a *siddhānta* text exposing the philosophical tenets of non-Buddhist and Buddhist schools; and the *Skhalitapramathanayuktihetusiddhi* (D. 3847, P. 5247), consisting of non-Buddhist objections and Buddhist answers.

The *Hastavālaprakaraṇa* (D. 3844, P. 5244 and 5248; see also autocommentary, D. 3845, P. 5245 and 5249),

attributed to Āryadeva in its Tibetan versions, is now considered to be a work of Dignāga, as indicated in the Chinese version (T.D. nos. 1620, 1621). If the identification of Piṅgalanetra (Chin., Ch'ing-mu) with Āryadeva is correct, Āryadeva I also composed a commentary on the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (T.D. no. 1564). [*See also* Mādhyamika.]

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MIMAKI KATSUMI

ĀRYA SAMĀJ. The Ārya Samāj ("society of honorable ones") is a modern Hindu reform movement founded in Bombay, India, in 1875 by Dayananda Sarasvati (1824–1883), advocating Hindu renewal by a return to Vedic religion. The basic principles of the Ārya Samāj were developed by its founder, Dayananda, a Gujarati brahman who became a *saṃnyāsin* ("renunciant") in 1847 and spent the rest of his life in religious quest. From 1847 to 1860 Dayananda lived as a wandering yogin searching for personal salvation, and later, after three years of Sanskrit study in Mathura with his guru, he worked as a reformer seeking to revive Hinduism.

Dayananda's sense of what Hinduism needed was gradually shaped by his guru, by debates with sectarian pandits in the western areas of Uttar Pradesh, and by discussions of religious issues with members of the Brāhmo Samāj and a variety of Hindu scholars and intellectuals in Calcutta. By the time he founded the Ārya Samāj on 10 April 1875, he had written a statement of doctrinal principles that was published two months later as *Satyārth prakāś*. A handbook on the daily Five Great Sacrifices, the *Pañcamahāyajñavidhi*, was published later in 1875, and a manual on the family life cycle rituals, *Saṃskārvidhi*, was published in 1877. Although these publications contained Vedic quotations in Sanskrit, the works themselves were composed in Hindi to make them accessible to the widest possible audience. Dayananda revised each of these basic guides over the next few years; as the mature product of his thinking, the revised editions were Dayananda's lasting legacy to the Ārya Samāj.

The central element in Dayananda's position was his belief in the truth of the Vedas. His guru had convinced him that the only true writings were those of the *ṛṣis* ("seers") who flourished before the composition of the *Mahābhārata* and that all subsequent scriptures contained false sectarian views, but Dayananda had to arrive at his own understanding of the line between truth and falsehood. He had lost his faith in image worship as a youth and was an active opponent of Vaiṣṇava sectarianism after 1863, but it took longer to reject the worship of Śiva and even longer to abandon the *advaita* ("nondualistic") philosophy of the Upaniṣads. By the second edition of *Satyārth prakāś*, however, he had decided that neither the Upaniṣads nor the Vedic ritual texts, the Brāhmaṇas, had the authority of revelation; this was an honor due only to the collections of Vedic hymns, (i.e., the four *mantra saṃhitā*s of the *Ṛgveda*, *Sāmaveda*, *Yajurveda*, and *Atharvaveda*), because they alone were directly revealed by God to the *ṛṣis*. True religion, that is Aryan religion, must thus be based only on the hymns, which convey eternal knowledge of the one true God.

The religion that Dayananda established on this base was derived from Vedic sources, but its particular features were his own creation. Although a brahman by birth, Dayananda, rejected Brahmanic control of Vedic religion. He insisted that Vedic knowledge should be available to everyone, including women and members of the traditionally impure *śūdra* castes. Membership in the Ārya Samāj was open to any person of good character who accepted its beliefs, and the Vedic rituals Dayananda prescribed could be performed by any Ārya, or member of the movement. Caste was irrelevant, since the same *dharma* (duties) applied to all: to perform Vedic rituals, to study and propagate Vedic knowledge, and to promote social well-being.

The theology that Dayananda bequeathed to the Ārya Samāj was as innovative as his social reform program and his attitude toward Vedic knowledge. He was convinced that the Vedic hymns proved the existence of a single supreme God. God is not, however, the only reality; rather, God is eternally coexistent with the *jīva*s (conscious and responsible human selves) and with *prakṛti* (the unconscious material world). In their ignorance, the *jīva*s bind themselves to rebirth in the world by their *karman* (actions). God cannot release the *jīva*s from responsiblity for their deeds, but in his mercy he has revealed the Vedas to guide the *jīva*s to *mokṣa* (freedom from rebirth and union with God). However, since the cause of *mokṣa* is finite human action, *mokṣa* itself must be finite, and the *jīva*s must eventually be reborn into the world. Each *jīva*, according to Dayananda, is

thus eternally active, moving from worldly involvement to freedom in God's bliss and then back again into the world.

Dayananda's views were rejected by every branch of Hindu orthodoxy, most vehemently by orthodox brahmans. In Bombay, though, Dayananda found a group of progressive Hindus led by members of several merchant castes who were eager to adopt his teachings and to organize, in 1875, the first chapter of the Ārya Samāj. The second important chapter, and the leading chapter from that point on, was founded in Lahore in 1877, led by a rising elite also predominantly from the merchant castes. The simple set of membership rules developed by the Lahore chapter was adopted by new chapters that sprang up rapidly elsewhere in the Punjab and in western Uttar Pradesh. Dayananda's emphasis on individual responsiblity and full religious participation appealed to the merchants and professionals who joined, and they in turn proved to be excellent organizers. Dayananda gave each chapter full responsibility for its affairs within the general rules, so that when he died in 1883 the Ārya Samāj was not only a self-sustaining movement, but it was able to begin active expansion in new directions.

The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic school was established in Lahore in 1886 and became a college in 1889, providing a model for an extensive system of schools and colleges. The practice of *śuddhi*, or reconversion by purification initiated by Dayananda on an individual basis, was expanded into a movement to reconvert Hindus who had become Christians or Muslims. Āryas were active in social reform programs and in the Indian nationalist movement, the more militant helping to form the Hindu Mahāsabhā party. The partition of India in 1947 placed Lahore and other centers in the Punjab within Pakistan, but the organization recovered from the loss to remain a significant force for Hindu education and social causes. With chapters in almost every city and town in northern India and with an estimated membership of over one million, it has proved to be the most successful of the nineteenth-century reform movements.

[*See also* Brāhmo Samāj *and the biography of Dayananda Sarasvati.*]

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THOMAS J. HOPKINS

ASAŅGA (c. 315–390 CE), founder of the Yogācāra school of Mahāyāna Buddhism in India. Asaṅga was born as a son of a brahman in Puruṣapura (Peshawar in Pakistan). His younger brother was the famous Yogācāra thinker Vasubandhu. Originally, Asaṅga belonged to the Mahīśāsaka school of Hīnayāna Buddhism, but later converted to the Mahāyāna. According to Paramārtha's biography of Vasubandhu, Asaṅga's conversion took place after an ascent to Tuṣita Heaven, where he received religious instruction from Maitreya, a *bodhisattva* who is worshiped as the future Buddha. Later, Asaṅga composed a treatise dealing with the seventeen stages *(bhūmi)* of *yoga* practice based on the teachings he had received from Maitreya. The same account is recorded by Hsüan-tsang in his *Ta T'ang hsi-yü chi*. As there exist some Yogācāra treatises that are traditionally ascribed to Maitreya(nātha), some scholars have assumed that the *bodhisattva* Maitreya, to whom Asaṅga is said to have owed his knowledge of the Yogācāra system, was really a historical person. The opinion of modern scholarship remains divided on this issue. [*See* Maitreya.] In his old age, Asaṅga is reported to have converted his brother Vasubandhu, previously an exponent of the Hīnayāna teachings, to Mahāyāna. Asaṅga continued a life of religious scholarship in the vicinity of Ayodhyā until his death at the age of seventy-five.

The most important of Asaṅga's many treatises are (1) *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, a brief explanation from the Yogācāra viewpoint of the elements constituting phenomenal existence; (2) *Hsien-yang sheng-chiao lun (*Āryadeśanāvikhyāpana)*, an abridgment of the *Yogācārabhūmi;* and (3) *Mahāyānasaṃgraha*, a comprehensive work on the Yogācāra doctrines and practices. Asaṅga's

works are characterized by a detailed analysis of psychological phenomena inherited from the Abhidharma literature of the Hīnayāna schools. The *Mahāyānasaṃgraha*, in which Asaṅga gives a systematic exposition of the fundamental tenets of the Yogācāra school, comprises ten chapters dealing respectively with the following subjects: (1) *ālaya-vijñāna*, (2) three natures of beings *(trisvabhāva)*, (3) the realization of the truth of representation-only *(vijñaptimātra)*, (4) six kinds of perfection *(pāramitā)*, (5) ten *bodhisattva* stages *(bhūmi)*, (6) moral conducts *(śīla)*, (7) meditative concentration *(samādhi)*, (8) non-discriminative knowledge *(nirvikalpa-jñāna)*, (9) the transformation of the base of existence *(āśraya-parāvṛtti)* and the state of "*nirvāṇa* without abode" *(apratiṣṭhita-nirvāṇa)*, and (10) the three bodies of the Buddha. The first two chapters are concerned with the object to be learnt *(jñeya)*, chapters 3 to 8, the learning and the practice leading to the attainment of Buddhahood, and chapters 9 to 10, the result of learning and practice. Asaṅga's basic thoughts are presented in the first two chapters.

The first chapter treats the doctrine of *ālaya-vijñāna* in full detail. The term *ālaya-vijñāna* occurs in earlier works such as the *Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra* and the *Yogācārabhūmi*, but there is no mention of it in the treatises attributed to Maitreya. The *ālaya-vijñāna* is a subliminal consciousness in which the impressions *(vāsanās)* of past experiences are preserved as the seeds *(bījas)* of future experiences. The "consciousness-in-activity" *(pravṛtti-vijñāna)*, that is, the six kinds of sensory and mental consciousness, is produced from the seeds preserved in the *ālaya-vijñāna*. When the *pravṛtti-vijñāna* functions, it leaves its impression in the *ālaya-vijñāna*. This impression becomes the seed of a future consciousness-in-activity. According to the Yogācāras, a human being is nothing other than the stream of consciousness thus formed by the mutual dependence of the *ālaya-vijñāna* and the consciousness-in-activity. Asaṅga admits that besides the six kinds of consciousness there is the "I-consciousness" called *manas* (or *kliṣṭa-manas*), whereby the *ālaya-vijñāna* is wrongly conceived of as a real self *(ātman)*. However, the classical theory of eightfold consciousness is not explicitly advocated by him. [*See also* Ālaya-vijñāna.]

The second chapter of the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* is devoted to the elucidation of the so-called three-nature doctrine, which maintains that all beings possess an "imagined nature" *(parikalpita-svabhāva)*, a "dependent nature" *(paratantra-svabhāva)* and a "consummated nature" *(pariniṣpanna-svabhāva)*. The image of an object that appears in a stream of consciousness is of dependent nature precisely because the image is dependent for its origination upon the impressions of past experi-

ences preserved in the *ālaya-vijñāna*. The object fictively superimposed upon it is of imagined nature, while the *absence* of the superimposed object, that is, the object as devoid *(śūnya)* of reality, is of consummated nature. This doctrine is also found expounded in earlier Yogācāra works, but Asaṅga sets forth an original view that the imagined and the consummated natures are two divisions or two aspects of the dependent nature.

The *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* was translated into Chinese by Paramārtha (499–567), and became the basic text of the newly formed She-lun sect (abbreviated from the Chinese name for the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha*, the *She ta-sheng lun*). This sect suffered a decline following the establishment of the Fa-hsiang sect by K'uei-chi, a disciple of Hsüan-tsang (602–664), who recognized the transmission of the Yogācāra teachings of Dharmapāla (c. 530–561) as authoritative.

[*See also* Yogācāra; Vijñāna; *and the biography of Vasubandhu.*]

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HATTORI MASAAKI

ASBURY, FRANCIS (1745–1816), chief architect of American Methodism. Raised on the fringes of Birmingham in England's "Black Country," where the industrial revolution was beginning, Asbury became a lay preacher at eighteen, eager "to live to God, and to bring others to do so." In 1766 he was admitted as one of John Wesley's itinerant preachers, and in 1771 he was chosen as one of the second pair of volunteers to serve in America. Asbury proved a tough and dedicated pioneer, a stable and influential leader in the manner of Wesley, whose writings saturated his mind. During the Revolutionary War he endeared himself to native-born Methodists by his refusal to return to England, and he restrained those who wanted to break away from Wesley.

In 1784 Wesley named the absent Asbury a member of the "legal hundred" to administer British Methodism after Wesley's death, and he also appointed him to receive ordination as "superintendent," or bishop without pomp, at the hands of Thomas Coke. Asbury refused such ordination without the summoning of a conference of his colleagues, who thereupon elected him to that office.

At first Asbury and Coke jointly administered the new Methodist Episcopal Church, but Coke's frequent absences from America increasingly left authority in the hands of Asbury, who was in any case much more fully identified with the American preachers and laity. Asbury was noteworthy for his own tireless travels, both in settled areas and along the expanding frontiers, and his constant recruiting and nurturing of native preachers. He maintained that Methodism would succeed in its mission only through the retention of a disciplined itinerant system and an authoritative but sacrificial episcopacy such as his own. His preachers accepted his discipline because they recognized in him the true marks of the apostle of American Methodism.

[See also Methodist Churches.]

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FRANK BAKER

ASCENSION. In many religious traditions, the sky is the home of the gods, and a heavenly ascent is a journey into the divine realms from which the soul—living or dead—reaps many rewards. Not only is a transcendent vision (or spiritual knowledge) the result of this upward journey, but even the possibility of divinization, becoming like one of the gods.

Myths from many cultures tell of numerous ways by which the journey can be made. A mountain path, a ladder, a tree, a rope, or even a cobweb will suffice. There is the further possibility of magical flight, if the soul has wings or the person a psychopomp. [See Flight.] Rituals of ascent involve the living person who makes the heavenly journey in order to become sanctified as a priest who mediates between his people and their gods, to become initiated into a new, sacred status, or for purposes of healing.

Ecstatic Techniques. In demonstrating that there are a number of parallel beliefs and rituals in all great religions of the world, Mircea Eliade cites shamanism as an example of an objective ecstatic performance. [See Shamanism.] Everything in the behavior and paraphernalia of the shaman is oriented toward one principal goal: the journey to heaven or the netherworld. This journey is concretely performed before the eyes of those who engage the shaman for practical purposes.

In *yoga*, an ecstatic technique of another kind, the cosmic layers are experienced in the form of a number of internal "principles," and the journey to the other world is now a journey within oneself: ecstasy becomes enstasy. This scheme of a passage from objectification to interiorization has also been applied to late antiquity. As Hans Jonas observes in his *Philosophical Essays* (1974), what was an objective ecstatic performance in gnosticism has become an inner experience in Neoplatonic and Christian mysticism.

These ecstatic techniques, both "objectified" and "interiorized," have played an outstanding role in religious experience from archaic times to the present. Yet ecstasy, whether in the form of wild Dionysiac frenzy or in the form of the shaman's "objective" journey to the netherworld, has repelled the practical Western mind. Even in the Greek language, *ekstasis* meant nothing but a state of psychic dissociation, an illness. Pathological symptoms of ecstasy, even in its "mild," mystical forms, have been stressed too often in modern research. In addition to the psychological interpretation of ecstasy as an abnormal state of mind, sociological explanations have been adduced to show that the anomic practices of ecstatic groups were a means of compensating for their own social marginality. Another tendency in modern anthropology is to explain all forms of ecstasy as a result of an intake of hallucinogins or as a result of chemical alterations in the human organism.

The task of the historian of religions is to examine forms of ecstasy in their historical context. Archaic religions included the motifs of ascension to heaven or descent to the netherworld, magical flight, separation of the soul from the body, and so on. In attempting to explain the origins of Western beliefs about the ascent of the soul, scholars have pointed out the analogies with shamanism, but cross-cultural contacts make it difficult to sort out influences. In the least, it seems that archaic Mediterranean religions knew a pattern of prophecy and heavenly ascension that has much in common with shamanism.

Western Culture. In the history of Western culture from Archaic Greece to the Renaissance, it appears that two religious trends have been particularly important. One of them started in Babylonia, was taken over by the

Jews, and from there influenced Christian apocalypses and Muslim legends of Muḥammad's ascent. The other originated in Archaic Greece, influenced Plato, was dominant during the Hellenistic period and late antiquity, and reached the late Middle Ages through the bias of scholasticism and the Italian Renaissance through the rediscovery of Platonism.

Greek religions. In Greece, belief and practice concerning catalepsy (state of trance) and the flight of the separable soul, either in space or into another dimension, exists apart from the belief in Dionysos, the ecstatic divinity *par excellence*. Rather, Greek medicine men, known in scholarly literature as *iatromanteis* (from *iatros*, "healer," and *mantis*, "seer"), are connected with Apollo, a divinity dwelling in Hyperborea, the mysterious land of the north. They are occasionally called *phoibolamptoi* or *phoiboleptoi* (i.e., "ravished by Phoibos-Apollo"). Besides being a medicine man, the *iatromantis* could be an *aithrobatēs* ("air-traveler"), a *kathartēs* ("purifier"), a *chresmologos* ("author of oracles"), and a *thaumatourgos* ("performer of miracles"). To the category of *iatromantis* belonged such notable personalities as Empedocles of Acragas (Agrigentum) and Pythagoras of Samos; among those *iatromanteis* perhaps less influential, but no less typical for this whole religious complex, were Abaris, Aristeas of Proconnesus, Bakis, Epimenides of Crete, and Hermotimos of Clazomenae. In general, the *iatromantis* excelled in the art of using catalepsy *(apnous)* for divination. It would be brash to say that catalepsy was induced by hallucinogenic substances. A plant called *alimos* (lit., "hunger-less") or hungerbane, which might have contained a hunger-suppressing alkaloid, is mentioned in the legend of Epimenides, who is reported to have slept for some decades in the cave of Zeus in Crete. Porphyry's statement (*Life of Pythagoras* 34) that Pythagoras also used hungerbane might suggest the correct interpretation of the ancient rationalized evidence ascribing to the Pythagoreans the use of the plant *halimos (Atriplex halimus L.)* in their poor diet. But the reverse is equally possible, since the terms *alimos* and *halimos* differ only by a rough breath.

Abaris, Aristeas, Epimenides, and Hermotimos are reported either to fly or to free their souls and leave their bodies in a state of catalepsy. Specifically, the soul of Aristeas, taking the form of a raven, was said to travel as far as Hyperborea; the soul of Epimenides, to converse with the gods; and the soul of Hermotimos, to visit faraway places and to record local events of which he could give an accurate description once it came back to its sheath (*vagina*, i.e., the body). When Hermotimos's wife delivered his inanimate body to his enemies, the Cantharidae, they burned it. Thus Hermotimos's soul lost its bodily shelter, on account of which both his wife and the Cantharidae were condemned to everlasting torture in Tartarus. Some scholars have seen Hermotimos as a marginal figure of Archaic Greece. Others have shown that, on the contrary, Hermotimos was probably a famous medium, whose art provoked the jealousy of the mighty Dionysiac confraternity *(hetairia)* of the Cantharidae.

The belief of the *iatromantis* that catalepsy was a state of separation between body and soul, in which the latter was supposed to have supernatural experiences, was resumed by Plato in the apocalypse of Er in the tenth book of the *Republic*. Er, son of Armenios of Pamphylia (Asia Minor), was wounded in a battle and appeared to be dead. His catalepsy lasted twelve days, until the very moment his body was going to be burned. Er then came back to life and reported all the secrets of afterlife that had been revealed to his soul.

Plato's pupil Heracleides Ponticus (fourth century BCE) took direct inspiration from the legends of the *iatromanteis*. In his dialogues, now lost in their entirety, he was concerned with catalepsy and its treatment (probably in the dialogue *On Catalepsy*, in which the main character was Empedokles), and with the stories of such famous ecstatics as Abaris, Aristeas, Epimenides, Hermotimos, and Pythagoras (probably in the dialogue *Abaris*). In one of these dialogues *(Abaris,* or *On Things in Hell)*, Heracleides introduced a fictitious character, Empedotimos, whose name was derived from *Empedokles* and *Hermotimos*. Some scholars have attributed to Empedotimos (i.e., to Heracleides) a very consequential innovation in Greek eschatology, namely the complete suppression of any subterrestrial place for punishment of the dead. Other scholars have claimed that the spread of celestial eschatology was due to the influence of Pythagoreanism and Stoicism, and indeed, Stoicism might have played an important role in the transformation of Hellenistic eschatology.

Hellenistic religions. By the end of the first century CE, when Plutarch wrote his eschatological myths, the idea of an underground Hades was no longer fashionable. Plutarch's ambition was to give a "modern" version of the great myths of Plato. Accordingly, Plato's eschatology was transformed to meet the intellectual exigencies of the time.

Very interesting details about catalepsy and incubation are given by Plutarch in his dialogue *On Socrates' Daemon*, based on traditions concerning the famous oracular cave of Trophonius at Lebadea, ten miles from Chaeronea on the way to Delphi. If Lamprias, Plutarch's brother, was really a priest of the sanctuary in Lebadea, then Plutarch may have had access to the wooden tablets on which those consulting the oracle

were supposed to write down the account of their experiences. The hero of this apocalypse is Timarch of Chaeronea, whose soul leaves his body through the *sutura frontalis* and visits the heavenly Hades, remaining below the sphere of the moon, which is only the first among the seven planetary spheres. In this dialogue, as well as in the dialogue *On the Face in the Moon*, the moon is the receptacle of the souls that are freed of their bodies, apart from those souls that fall again into the circle of transmigration *(metensōmatōsis)*. The earth is viewed here as the lowest and meanest point of the universe; accordingly, the underground Hades and Tartarus of the Platonic myths are no longer needed.

The second important myth of Plutarch is contained in the dialogue *On the Delayed Revenge of the Gods*, in which many elements of the apocalypse of Er are resumed. Aridaeus of Soloi, whose name derives from that of the tyrant Aridiaeus in the *Republic* of Plato (615e; also known as Aridaeus in late antique sources), tries to make a fortune using dishonest means. After a fall in which he strikes his head, he enters a cataleptic state for two days. He is believed to be dead, but he wakes up just as he is about to be buried. After this experience, Aridaeus changes his name to Thespesius ("godly, wonderful") and becomes a very pious man. In fact, his soul has watched the judgment of the dead and witnessed the painful lot of the sinners.

Gnosticism. In the gnostic systems of the second and third centuries CE, a vivid polemic against astrology takes peculiar forms. The seven "planets" themselves (i.e., the five known planets, the sun, and the moon), the signs, the decans, and the degrees of the zodiac are often represented as evil archons, or heavenly rulers. These are extremely important for the embodiment and disembodiment of the individual soul.

The German scholar Wilhelm Anz, a representative of the Religionsgeschichtliche Schule, argued that the heavenly ascent of the soul through the spheres represented a central doctrine of gnosticism *(Zur Frage nach dem Ursprung des Gnostizismus*, Leipzig, 1897). In a way, although for reasons other than those adduced by Anz, this statement may still be maintained. [See Gnosticism.] In his major work, *Gnosis und spätantiker Geist* (Göttingen, 1934–1954), Hans Jonas has shown that gnosis ("saving knowledge") led to an *Entweltlichung*, or "a shedding of one's cosmic nature." Therefore, the techniques intended to assure the gnostic's soul a safe passage through the spheres of the hostile archons up to the *plērōma* ("fullness") of the godhead actually form the most important part of gnosis.

One of the first testimonies for a typically gnostic theory of the embodiment and disembodiment of the soul is the doctrine of Basilides, a Christian active in Alex-andria, Egypt, around 120 CE. According to Basilides, the transcendental spirit of man is temporarily attached to a soul. During its descent, the planetary vices attack the soul and stick to it in the form of concretions of "appendages" *(prosartēmata)*. The same theory is set forth by Basilides' son Isidorus in his treatise *On the Temporary Soul.*

The technical expression *antimimon pneuma*, or "counterfeit spirit" (sometimes *antikeimenon*, i.e., "evil spirit"), occurs for the first time in the *Apocryphon* (Secret Book) *of John*, one of the oldest surviving gnostic treatises, extant in four Coptic versions. The heresiologist Irenaeus, bishop of Lugdunum (Lyons), who wrote between 180 and 185 CE, based his description of the system of the so-called Barbelo gnostics on it. Some scholars claim that the *Apocryphon of John* predates even Basilides, whose theory of the *prosartēmata* is based on the *antimimon pneuma* doctrine. In fact, the *antimimon pneuma* is an appended spirit, an intermediary between the soul and the material body. The soul itself is a creation of the evil heavenly archons (i.e., the seven "planets") or, to be more precise, of the seven attributes forming conjunctions (syzygies) together with the archons.

The formation of the *antimimon pneuma* is more explicitly stated in the third book of the Coptic treatise *Pistis Sophia* (chap. 131). The "counterfeit spirit" derives directly from the archons of the *heimarmenē*, or astral destiny, which are the seven "planets." The *antimimon pneuma* follows the soul in all its reincarnations *(metabolai)* and is itself a cause of reincarnation. The goal of gnostic mysteries is to free the soul from bondage to the *antimimon pneuma*. On the basis of the order of the planets in chapter 136 of *Pistis Sophia* and in other texts of late antiquity, it appears that this doctrine derives from the Hermetic astrological treatise *Panaretos*, which includes a discussion of the degrees *(klēroi)* or positions *(loci)* of the planets, that is, the coordinates within the horoscope of nativity, where each planet is supposed to confer its principal qualities upon the subject. In their polemic against astrology, gnostics mention only the negative qualities or vices derived from the planetary influence.

The doctrine of *antimimon pneuma* became very influential in Hermetism, where it merged with the idea of the soul's descent into the world and its return to heaven. During its descent through the planetary spheres, the soul acquired from each planet the dominant vice ascribed to it in astrology. During its heavenly ascent, the soul put off those concretions and abandoned them to each planet *(Poimandres* 25–26). The ascent of the soul in gnosticism could be much more complicated. On the one hand, the archons did not represent

the planets only, but also the 12 signs, the 36 decans, and the 360 degrees of the zodiacal circle, as well as the 365 days of the solar year. On the other hand, a number of the aeons, or levels that the soul had to transverse, had no connection whatsoever with astrology. They bore arbitrary names and occupied various places *(to-poi)* within the system, which gnostics were supposed to learn by heart, or even to visualize in their meditation practices. Moreover, the ritual performances or "mysteries" intended to assure the soul an easy passage through the archons differed widely.

All the authentic gnostic treatises that have survived belong to an ascetic gnosis. The fourth-century heresiologist Epiphanius reported, however, that certain gnostics called Phibionites practiced *coitus reservatus* 365 times, uttering the names of the archons from the bottom to the top of the world, and again 365 times from the top to the bottom *(Panarion* 9). No doubt this would have been a strenuous practice. The ascetic gnostics, such as those who produced the two *Books of Ieū* (extant in a Coptic version), were more moderate. They had to learn by heart only some ninety names of the heavenly treasures *(thēsauroi)* and the Ieūs deriving from a primordial Ieū-Father. There were sixty treasures altogether, each one with its own configuration, occupants, gates, and watchers. The adept was supposed to learn by heart the formidable names of the aeons and of the three guardians *(phulakai)* of each treasure, together with the magic "number" *(psēphos)* and the "seal" *(sphragis)* or protective talisman corresponding to each aeon. For many adepts, this practice must have been too difficult. The Savior eventually revealed to them one complete set of names, numbers, and seals, by means of which they could open all of the heavenly gates.

Magic, theurgy, and the mysteries. The word *magic* is related to *Magos,* a synonym of *Chaldaean;* theurgy *stricto sensu* is the practice described by the *Chaldaean Oracles,* a second-century work composed by Julian, called "the Chaldaean," and written down by his son Julian "the Theurgist." [*See* Theurgy.] This evidence seems to indicate that the Iranian Magi, dwelling in Mesopotamia (hence "Chaldaeans") were the authors of sophisticated ecstatic techniques. In fact, the heresiologist Arnobius, who wrote at the beginning of the fourth century CE, attributes to the Magi formulas and other means for transporting their clients to heaven. It seems that Arnobius directed his polemic against a group of Neoplatonic mystics who maintained the doctrines of the *Chaldaean Oracles.* The elevation process described there, as well as the relation between the ascent of the adept's soul and the god Mithra, described in a Greek magical papyrus, actually have nothing to do with Iran.

They belong instead to the intellectual products of late Hellenism, dominated by an obsession with human liberation from the world and out of the world, in or beyond the heavenly spheres.

As far as the mysteries of late antiquity are concerned, their divinities, in some cases traditionally connected with the earth and the underworld Hades, are transported entirely to heaven, where they are usually supposed to receive the souls of their adepts after death. In the mysteries of Isis, according to the second-century Latin writer Apuleius, the adept underwent an initiation consisting of either an ecstatic experience or a ritual enactment meant to give the illusion thereof. The second-century Platonic writer Celsus ascribed to the mysteries of Mithra a ritual object *(sumbolon)* consisting of a ladder with seven steps or "gates" *(klimax heptapylos),* representing the spheres of the planets. According to Celsus, this object symbolized the passage of the adept's soul through the planetary spheres. This interpretation seems unlikely, however, since the steps are arranged according to the order of the days of the planetary week, not according to any known order of the planets in the universe. Attempts to explain the meaning of the ladder and to relate it to the testimonies concerning the mysteries of Mithra themselves have yet to meet with success.

Passage of the soul through the spheres. In Hellenistic culture a relationship was established between the seven "planets" and the levels that the soul had to transverse in its heavenly ascent; this link constitutes the main difference between the Hellenistic tradition and the Jewish tradition (and, later, the Islamic tradition) concerning ecstatic experiences. Gnostic polemics against astrology gave rise to the formation of the very influential theory of the passage of the soul through the spheres, which was fashionable in Neoplatonism from the third century CE down to the sixteenth. It is impossible to state whether early Neoplatonists (Porphyry, Proclus, and Macrobius) took this theory from Numenius of Apamea or from the gnostic-Hermetic tradition.

The embodiment *(ensōmatōsis)* of the soul entails a descent from the top of the cosmos to the bottom, through the planetary spheres that confer certain characteristic features upon the soul. Disembodiment is the reverse of this process. In late Neoplatonism, the ethereal body that enveloped the soul and that was formed by planetary qualities was called the "vehicle" *(ochēma).* Sometimes this "vehicle" was distinguished from others that were meant to serve as intermediaries between the soul and the material body, according to a theory of Aristotle that was very influential in Greco-Roman and Arab medicine. The theory of the passage of the soul through the spheres was taken over from Ma-

crobius by medieval medicine and psychology. Through the works of Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499), it became one of the least controversial doctrines from the time of the Renaissance down to the end of the sixteenth century and even into the seventeenth.

Judaism. The heavenly journey belongs to the constant pattern of Jewish and Jewish-Christian apocalypses, beginning with *1 Enoch*, the oldest parts of which were completed at the end of the third century BCE. The voyage through seven or three heavens became a commonplace of Jewish apocalyptic literature with the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (second century BCE.) Seven (heavens or palaces) is the number that prevails in the Jewish tradition of mysticism related to the *merkavah*, the chariot carrying God's throne in the vision of Ezekiel (*Ez.* 1). Under the name *ma'aseh merkavah* ("work of the chariot"), this form of speculation goes back to the Pharisees of the Second Temple. The first testimonies appear in *1 Enoch* (14:11–19) and in the Greek fragments of the second-century BCE Jewish tragedian Ezekiel of Alexandria. Important pieces of *merkavah* tradition also occur in the Jewish apocalypses *2 Enoch*, the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, and the *Vision of Isaiah*, the last of which is extant in a Christian version, slightly revised by a gnostic hand. Christian apocalypses (e.g., the *Apocalypse of Paul*), reflect the same basic ecstatic experience.

From the second or third century to the sixth century CE, *merkavah* mysticism is mainly expressed through "heikhalotic literature" (from *heikhal*, "heavenly palace"), represented by various groups of testimonies of different dates. Jewish magic, as recorded in, for example, the *Sefer ha-razim* (sixth or seventh century CE), was also concerned with the vision of seven heavens, which was fundamental to *merkavah* mysticism and heikhalotic literature. The related writings contain the revelation of seven "heavenly palaces," which the adept was supposed to attain after strenuous preparation. In Jewish mysticism, the seven heavens are never associated with the seven planets.

Iranian religions. Ecstatic experiences induced by hallucinogens seem to be attested to in pre-Zoroastrian Iran. Among the drugs used, two have been identified as being extracted from henbane *(Hyoscyamus niger)* and hemp *(Cannabis indica)*, both called in Middle Persian *bang* (Av., *banha*; cf. Skt. *bhang*). Zoroastrian reform was directed against wild ecstasy, but the Younger Avestan priests reintroduced the use of *bang, mang,* and *hōm* (Av., *haoma*; cf. Skt. *soma*); these were sometimes mixed with wine.

Apart from some accounts of experiences that might be considered visionary, apocalypses seem to be completely missing from the Zoroastrian tradition until the

third century CE, when the famous *mōbad* (priest) Kerdēr, defender of the true religion, committed one of his revelations to writing on a slab at Sar Mashhad. In the ninth century CE, two apocalypses were recorded in Middle Persian: the vision of Virāz the Righteous (*Ardā Wīrāz Nāmag*) and a vision attributed to Vishtāsp, the prince who protected Zarathushtra. Both works contain thoroughly Zoroastrian elements, but, among other very heterogeneous influences, they bear the decisive mark of the Christian apocalyptic tradition (e.g., the motif of the bridge to heaven that widens to let the just pass and contracts to fling the impious into hell). Traditionally Zoroastrian are the three cosmic layers, or "heavens," that the visionary crosses—corresponding to *humata*, "fair thoughts" (the stars); *hūkhta*, "fair words" (the moon); *hvarshta*, "fair deeds" (the sun)—to arrive at *anagra raoca*, or Paradise, the layer of "infinite lights."

Islam. The Mi'rāj, or ascent of the prophet Muḥammad, is extant in three principal groups of Arabic testimonies from the eighth and ninth centuries CE, as well as in three medieval Latin versions (the first of which, the *Liber scale*, was first translated into Castilian in 1264 at the court of Alphonse X). The Islamic tradition is directly dependent on Jewish and Jewish-Christian apocalypses and shows no trace of Iranian influence. [*See* Mi'rāj.]

Accompanied by the archangel Gabriel, the Prophet is transported to the first heaven either on Burāq (a sort of winged horse) or in a tree growing with vertiginous speed up to the sky. They stop ten to fifteen times, but only the first seven or eight halts represent the "heavens." According to Jewish tradition, these heavens are never associated with the seven "planets" and therefore should not be called "astronomical heavens," as is done now and then in scholarly literature. The Hellenistic doctrine of the seven planetary spheres, which is the basis for Dante's depiction of Paradise in his *Commedia*, does not occur in Jewish-Christian, Arabic, or Iranian testimonies.

Medieval Christianity. Late Hellenistic Christian apocalypses continued to play an important role during the Middle Ages. Very influential was the Latin *Vision of Esdra*, known in a tenth-century manuscript. From the twelfth century, which was particularly productive as far as revelations are concerned, three works are among the most important: the *Vision of Alberic* (1127), written by a monk of Montecassino; the *Vision of Tundal* (1149), whose author is also known as Thugdal; and the *Purgatory of Saint Patrick* (1189). The *Vision of Alberic* was possibly influenced by the Mi'raj legends, transmitted by Constantine the African (1020–1087), a translator from Arabic who spent the last seventeen

years of his life at Montecassino. The *Vision of Tundal* and the *Purgatory of Saint Patrick* belong to Irish Christianity but, despite an opinion still held by some scholars, do not seem to reflect any distinctively Celtic themes.

The *Vision of Alberic* contains an episode in which the soul of Alberic, then a boy of ten, is carried by a dove through the planetary heavens up to the throne of God. The order of the heavens is strange (Moon, Mars, Mercury, Sun, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn) and seems to reflect a failed attempt to integrate two traditions: the Jewish-Christian-Muslim on the one hand and the Hellenistic-Hermetic-Neoplatonic on the other. Attempts at such integration did not meet with full success until Dante's *Commedia* in the early fourteenth century.

Scholarly Theories and New Directions. The Religionsgeschichtliche Schule, represented or supported by such personalities as Wilhelm Brandt, Wilhelm Anz, Wilhelm Bousset, Richard Reitzenstein, Franz Cumont, Joseph Kroll, Rudolf Bultmann, and Geo Widengren, gave an important place to the doctrine of the ascension of the soul. Starting from ninth-century writings in Middle Persian, they inferred that these testimonies reflected an ancient Iranian lore, which they transformed into a sort of primordial religion, not only pre-Christian but also pre-Platonic. In point of fact, the reverse is true, namely that the writings in Middle Persian were directly influenced by late antique, Jewish, Christian, Neoplatonic, and even Islamic traditions.

As far as the ascent of the soul is concerned, Bousset took over Anz's theory of the Iranian origin of this doctrine and came to the conclusion that the belief in the ascent of the soul and gnostic dualism both originated in Iran and were propagated in late antiquity by means of the mysteries of Mithra. Bousset distinguished between two classes of testimonies concerning the ascent: one designating three heavenly layers, to which he ascribed an ancient Iranian background, and the other indicating seven heavens, to which he ascribed a Babylonian origin. Here Bousset based his argument on several false assumptions: that the Babylonians were not acquainted with the ascent of the soul, that they postulated an invariable number of seven heavens, and that they established a connection between these heavens and the seven "planets." In fact, the idea of ascent existed in Babylonian as well as in other religions, the heavenly layers in Babylonia varied between three and nine, and no relation between these realms and the planets could have been established before the Greek Eudoxus of Cnidus (fifth–fourth centuries BCE) came to the genial idea that the complicated trajectories of the planets could be explained as the result of the movement of several homocentric spheres around the earth.

Indeed, Jewish testimonies concerning either three or seven heavens must have a Babylonian background, since they never establish any relation between heavens and "planets." The other main tradition, which extends from Eudoxos and Aristotle to Dante and Marsilio Ficino, is a purely Hellenistic one that scarcely interfered with the Babylonian-Jewish-Muslim line. With regard to Iran, it is safe to state that its influence upon the development of the two great schemes of ascent was negligible. On the contrary, it seems that during the reign of the Sasanid dynasty Iranian religion was open to various alien influences, a phenomenon that became even more intense after the Islamic conquest.

All the traditional scholarly interpretations of the ascent of the soul—of which the Religionsgeschichtliche Schule introduced only the most influential version—have one underlying feature in common: they reduce the complexity of the phenomenon to the search of a common origin, be it Iranian, Pythagorean, Greek in general, Jewish, or shamanistic (Karl Meuli). Psychological approaches have also been attempted, unfortunately too much under the influence of nineteenth-century rationalism to credit further discussion here. Much of the task of current research is necessarily oriented toward a critical reexamination and, indeed, a rejection, of ancient theories. Rather than searching for origins, it is necessary to assemble the widest possible corpus of testimonies from different traditions, with the goal of demonstrating interferences, influences, and cross-cultural contacts. At the same time, respect for the specificity of the religious fact should not obscure the researcher's ability to recognize universal categories, patterns, and typologies.

[*For further discussion of the journeys of the soul, see* Soul. *See also* Afterlife *and* Apotheosis.]

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ASCETICISM. The word *asceticism* is derived from the Greek noun *askēsis*, meaning "exercise, practice, training." The Greek athlete, for example, subjected himself to systematic exercise or training in order to attain a goal of physical fitness. In time, however, the word began to assume philosophical, spiritual, and ethical implications: one could "exercise" and "train" not only the body in the pursuit of a physical goal but also—systematically and rigorously—the will, the mind, and the soul so as to attain a more virtuous life or a higher spiritual state.

Although the modern word *asceticism* has eluded any universally accepted definition, the term, when used in a religious context, may be defined as a voluntary, sustained, and at least partially systematic program of self-discipline and self-denial in which immediate, sensual, or profane gratifications are renounced in order to attain a higher spiritual state or a more thorough absorp-

tion in the sacred. Because religious man *(homo religiosus)* seeks a transcendent state, asceticism—in either rudimentary or developed form—is virtually universal in world religion.

Origins of Asceticism. The origins of asceticism are found in primitive or archaic society, that is, in prehistory. Many of the major ascetic forms such as fasting, sexual continence, and seclusion appear universally among present-day primitives or nonliterate peoples. The purpose of such prohibitions or taboos is very frequently to escape or avoid the influence of demonic powers. There is, for example, a prevalent belief in primitive societies that evil forces may enter the body while one is eating. To avoid this, one fasts for certain periods or abstains from certain foods altogether. The objective of primitive prohibitions may also be purification. In preparation for ritual activities of a particularly sacred nature, such as initiation, marriage, or sacrifice, participants rid themselves of impurity by engaging in often austere acts of self-denial. Such purity is particularly necessary if one is to approach the gods. To a lesser degree, one may also use austerities as a form of penance to atone for transgressions, thus averting the wrath of a deity. Certain practices, particularly fasting and seclusion, are also employed to induce visions or vivid dreams. Among American Indians, for example, such techniques are used during puberty initiations to evoke a revelation in dream or a vision of the youth's guardian spirit.

Although the origins of asceticism may be found in primitive society, it is often argued that asceticism per se exists there only in rudimentary form or not at all. One's position on this issue depends almost entirely upon how one defines asceticism, thus making the issue less soluble but also less critical. It should be observed, however, that such ascetic forms as fasting, seclusion, infliction of pain, and even bodily mutilation have a far more compulsory, less voluntary character in preliterate than in literate societies. The ordeals associated with puberty rites, for example, are more or less imposed. Further, the austerities to which the primitive submits rarely demonstrate a systematic and sustained program of ascetic behavior, when compared with comprehensive systems such as yoga or monastic life. Also, a preponderant number of primitive austerities, acts of self-denial, and taboos have as their sole intent the avoidance of evil, so it is questionable whether they should even be labeled asceticism. But since in almost all societies asceticism is elitist, being meant for the few, a developed asceticism in primitive society should be sought among such sacral specialists as the shaman. Although the shaman is often "compelled" by higher powers to assume his role, the rigors of shamanic life

are hardly imposed from without in the usual sense. Seclusion, fasting, sexual continence, and endless vigils are part of a sustained self-discipline calculated to generate visions, bring communion with spirits, and penetrate sacred realms.

Forms and Objectives of Asceticism. Viewed cross-culturally, the variety of ascetic forms is limited. Virtually universal are (1) fasting, (2) sexual continence, (3) poverty, under which may be included begging, (4) seclusion or isolation, and (5) self-inflicted pain, either physical (through such means as whipping, burning, or lacerating) or mental (e.g., contemplation of a judgment day, of existence in hell, or of the horrors associated with transmigration). More difficult to define, but perhaps also more significant, is what may be termed an "inner asceticism," consisting essentially of spiritual rather than physical discipline. Such asceticism involves not detachment from or renunciation of any specific worldly pleasure but rather detachment from or renunciation of the world per se. It is reflected in the biblical attitude of being "in the world, but not of it," or in the *Bhagavadgītā*'s "renunciation in action, rather than renunciation of action." It appears in almost every major religion yet has no equivalent in primitive thought. In addition to the universal forms indicated, specific note must also be made of that set of practices or techniques (e.g., specific postures, chanting, breathing techniques) that make up the yogic and meditative complex indigenous to the Indian subcontinent. Yoga, although an asceticism of the body, is an inner asceticism as well. [*See* Spiritual Discipline.]

Asceticism in classical and modern religion is generally rooted in a developed and well-articulated philosophical or theological system. Such a system provides the rationale or justification for ascetic activity. It is helpful to consider the objectives of asceticism from the perspective of these systems, whether theistic or nontheistic.

Virtually all theistic traditions develop a mystical movement wherein the individual, through an ascetic program, seeks a personal union with the deity. [*See* Mystical Union.] This desire for personal experience of the deity may be seen as a reaction against doctrinal abstraction or ethical formalism. Even theistic traditions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, in which the gap between creator and creature is perceived to be unbridgeable, have produced ascetics in pursuit of such mystic union: the eleventh-century Jewish mystic Baḥye ibn Paquda; Johannes Eckhart (d. 1327 CE) and Johannes Tauler (d. 1361 CE) in medieval Christianity; and the entire Ṣūfī movement in Islam. Because the mystic seeks to bridge the gap between man and God, the effort has often been perceived as audacious from the perspective of theistic orthodoxy. Virtually all mystics in a theistic tradition, therefore, make it clear that the state of apparent union with the deity is only momentary and, at best, a foretaste of that salvation yet to come. The Ṣūfī, like many mystics in theism, does not claim to be equal to God, but rather to be extinguished or lost in him.

In nontheistic traditions this thirst for the ultimate through mystical experience takes on varied forms. It is frequently a quest for the true or essential self, which is perceived to be identical with the ground or foundation of all creation. The Hindu yogin employs the sophisticated techniques of Yoga to realize that his *ātman*, or permanent self, is one with *brahman*, the unchanging foundation of all. The *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali (first century CE) describes breathing and meditative techniques, which, when coupled with sexual continence, fasting, bodily postures, and other disciplines, permit the individual to move "inward and downward" until his true essence is "perceived." Similarly, the meditative techniques of Zen Buddhism permit the practitioner to realize the Buddha nature within himself.

Experiential knowledge of the true self in nontheistic traditions is frequently related to the liberation of the self from the sorrows and illusions of this phenomenal world. According to the Hindu philosopher Śaṅkara (788–820 CE), the body and personality with which we habitually identify ourselves are revealed to be no more than *māyā*, or illusion. Our suffering and bondage are rooted in ignorance, which ascetic-meditative effort gradually dispels through the mystical knowledge that it produces. The Jain monk, through the most rigorous of ascetic techniques involving total passivity and detachment from the world, seeks to purify and eventually liberate his true self *(jīva)* from the material defilements that most actions produce. Although Theravāda Buddhism denies the existence of any permanent self, its objective is, like that of the Indian traditions, liberation from the round of worldly suffering. An ascetic life of monastic simplicity and celibacy, an ascetic program of detachment, and a meditative effort to cultivate a selfless state lead the Theravāda monk to realization of *nirvāṇa*—"extinction" or "liberation."

Unlike the theistic systems, in which a mystical experience generated through ascetic activity can never grant salvation, nontheistic systems frequently equate such an experience or realization with salvation itself. Awareness of one's *ātman* in Hinduism or of one's *puruṣa* in Sāṃkhya (i.e., a philosophical system associated with traditional Yoga) or of one's Buddha nature in Zen *is* enlightenment or salvation. Unlike the theistic religions, nontheistic systems frequently affirm that salvation is attainable here on earth. One becomes "liberated

in life" as in Tantrism, or one realizes, as in Zen, that one was never bound.

In both theistic and nontheistic systems asceticism may be seen as a meritorious form of behavior, a good work, or a laudable course of action felt to ensure or facilitate a preferred condition after death. Self-denial is considered to be a way of earning posthumous reward. In theistic traditions such as Catholicism, Śaivism, and Vaiṣṇavism, such activity has often been thought to ensure or facilitate salvation in a way that mysticism cannot. A monastic life of self-denial, for example, in which one is secluded from the temptations of the flesh, could be esteemed as a more perfect life than one lived in the world. Despite its prevalence, however, this effort to earn one's own salvation has frequently appeared problematic and even pretentious in theistic traditions, given their emphasis upon salvation as a gift of the deity. In nontheistic traditions ascetic works are logically more appropriate. Through self-denial, for example, one can burn out bad *karman* (the effect of past deeds) and improve one's future state in the ongoing round of transmigration. In nontheistic systems, however, ascetic works divorced from knowledge or realization can never generate salvation itself, but only some lesser objecive.

In both theistic and nontheistic systems, acts of self-denial—particularly self-inflicted pain—may serve as a form of penance of previous misdeeds. Hindu law books such as the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (composed between 200 BCE and 100 CE) detail numerous activities of this kind to atone for transgressions, so that the penitent can avoid torment in either the next life or an intermediate hell. In the theistic traditions of Islam and medieval Christianity, activities such as self-flagellation were often employed. In nontheistic systems these practices function mechanistically to overcome the negative consequences of evil deeds, whereas in theistic traditions they are performed in order to warrant the forgiveness of a personal god. Because its objective is merely forgiveness, in theistic systems asceticism as a form of penance has enjoyed a less problematic rationale than has asceticism as a way of achieving salvation itself. This is particularly true when ascetic acts are seen as an *expression* of repentance rather than as a means of earning it.

Most evident in Catholicism, but confined neither to it nor to theistic traditions in general, is the use of asceticism, particularly self-inflicted pain, as a means of experiencing or reexperiencing the sufferings of either a deity or a human paradigm (i.e., a model individual). Nontheistic Jainism produced ascetics whose acts of self-denial took as their model the activities of Jain saints (*tīrthaṅkara*s) such as Pārśva or Mahāvīra. The

Hindu hero Bhīṣma was so pierced by arrows during the great battle described in the *Bhagavadgītā* that, supported by their shafts, he lay parallel to the ground. This event forms the model for the well-known bed of nails employed by some Indian holy men. In Catholic Christianity the imitation of Christ's suffering is raised to a level of mystical significance. Suffering not only as Christ suffered but *with* him has become a means of mystical union with the deity. In this regard, suffering became virtually an end in itself, taking on soteriological significance.

Viewed cross-culturally, a given ascetic form may have different, even opposite objectives. In primitive society, for example, self-flagellation or scourging is intended primarily to drive away demonic powers that have attached themselves to the individual. In Christianity, however, the same activity—once prevalent in Italy, the Rhineland, and Mexico—was intended to produce pain, thereby bringing the ascetic into mystical union with the suffering Christ. Likewise, fasting in Christianity often has sought to produce pain, either as penance or, again, as a way of identifying with the suffering deity. [*See* Fasting.]

In Yoga, however, the purpose of fasting is quite different. The objective is not to cause but to alleviate discomfort. By fasting, the yogin conditions his body so he can go for prolonged periods not only without food but, more important, without the thought of food. Fasting is therefore a technique through which the yogin becomes oblivious of his body and is thus able to direct all his mental energies toward meditation. Similarly, the many other forms of self-discipline found in Yoga—the postures and sexual continence, for instance—are to be seen less as privation than as techniques to redirect energies toward a meditative end.

Yoga itself, however, as an ascetic form, has different objectives. In most of Upaniṣadic Hinduism its purpose is to realize the unity of one's permanent self, or *ātman*, with the unchanging foundation of the universe, or *brahman*. In Theravāda Buddhism its goal is to realize that there is no permanent self, while in the Sāṃkhya system it seeks to realize that the true self is ideally in a state of total isolation from the phenomenal world of flux.

In virtually every religious tradition, meditation or contemplation takes place in some degree of seclusion. Anthony (d. 356 CE) and other Christian saints lived for prolonged periods alone in the African desert. The early Buddhists likened themselves to rhinos who wandered alone, far from the haunts of men, and Taoist recluses sought to commune with nature beyond the reach of civilization and its distractions. But again, the goals of such secluded exercises are varied. The Taoist seeks

harmony with nature and therewith serenity and joy. The Theravāda Buddhist seeks to realize that nature is transient and thus a source of sorrow. Saint Anthony, somewhat like a Tibetan Buddhist, went forth to confront demonic powers in their own ominous haunts. [See Meditation.]

Cross-cultural Issues. Although universal, asceticism is far more prevalent in certain traditions than in others. Classical Jainism, early and Tibetan Buddhism, early Christianity, and various branches of Hinduism are heavily ascetic, whereas Confucianism, Shintō, Zoroastrianism, and Israelite religion are not.

World-rejection. Although it is narrow to suggest that only traditions that postulate an evident dualism between soul and body or God and world or matter and spirit produce ascetic activity, it is nonetheless fair to suggest that dualistic philosophies are inclined both to justify and generate a dramatic and developed asceticism. Jain asceticism, for example, is rooted in the dualism between spirit and matter and the need for purging the former of the latter. Much Hellenistic Christian asceticism, particularly self-inflicted pain, was rooted in a dualism between spirit and flesh in which the body was perceived as evil. The ascetic efforts of the Theravāda Buddhist are rooted in the dualism between *saṃsāra*, bondage in the round of transmigration, and *nirvāṇa*, or liberation.

Although dualistic traditions, with the exception of Zoroastrianism, lend themselves well to ascetic activity, it would be wrong to conclude that asceticism necessarily involves a denigration of this world, the material realm, or the body. Although some ascetic traditions are otherworldly, many others are not. The Tantric tradition of Hinduism and its Buddhist equivalent, the Vajrayāna, are clearly ascetic, employing various yogic and meditative techniques. Yet the worldly realm, including the body and its passions, is not denigrated by them. The body, in fact, is seen as a means toward salvation, a servant of the spirit requiring nurture, even praise. Similarly, those in a Zen or Taoist monastery exhibit many ascetic traits, yet are far more inclined to rejoice in and affirm this world than to reject it.

The most complete repudiation of world-rejection may be found in what the German sociologist Max Weber (1864–1920) termed "inner-worldly asceticism," which abandons specific ascetic activities as well as monastic life to attain salvation in the midst of worldly activity. Although it exists to a limited degree in various religions, the most thoroughgoing expression of inner-worldly asceticism appears in the reformed traditions of Protestantism. A disciplined, methodical, controlled—in short, ascetic—pursuit of one's vocation in the world came to be seen as both service to God and confirmation of one's salvation.

Asceticism and normal behavior. Although the ascetic need not renounce the world per se, he desires the sacred and therefore rarely accepts life as it is given. Seeking to transcend the normal or the natural, he rejects the given in favor of the possible. For this reason the ascetic frequently does the opposite of what human nature or social custom may dictate. In Yoga this practice is explicitly referred to as "going against the current." The yogin does not sit as natural man sits, breathe as natural man breathes, eat as natural man eats. Ascetic behavior not only deviates from the norm, it very frequently seeks an extreme. Viewed cross-culturally, however, these extremes may be diametrically opposed. The ascetic, for example, may shave his head completely, as do most Buddhist monks; or he may never cut his hair at all, as is the case with many Hindu holy men. The ascetic may wear very distinctive clothing, as does the Roman Catholic priest, or he may wear no clothing at all, as do the "sky-clad" (Digambara) monks of Jainism.

Some ascetics constantly wander, as did Mahāvīra, the founder-reformer of Jainism, who to avoid permanent ties remained no more than one night in any village. Other ascetics, however, restrict their movement dramatically, living, as did many Christians, in cells so small that they could hardly move. The ascetic may also differentiate himself either by remaining perpetually silent or by chanting and reciting continually. The ascetic may nurture, cleanse, or purify his body inordinately, or not only neglect his body but abuse it in countless ways. The ascetic may overcome the human norm either by abstaining from sex or by making sex a significant part of his ascetic routine. In "left-handed" Tantrism, for example, sexual intercourse affords a ritual procedure—indeed, a technique, which, when coupled with meditation, is used to alter consciousness. The activity is dramatically ascetic, as no ejaculation is permitted; the semen is withheld or "returned" at the last moment. By so returning his semen, the Tantric too "goes against the current," transcending normal or profane activity.

According to almost every religious tradition, ascetics, because of their activity, develop magical powers or miraculous abilities. Although often recognized as an obstacle to higher spiritual goals, such reported powers play an important role at the popular level. Muslim fakirs who walk unharmed on burning coals, Indian yogins who levitate, Christian saints who miraculously heal, Tibetan lamas who read minds, Buddhist monks who remember past lives, Chinese Taoists who live for-

ever, and primitive shamans who fly—these are but a few examples. [*See* Magico-Religious Powers.]

The psychology of asceticism. Despite the fact that all religions condemn extreme forms of asceticism, pathological excesses have appeared in every tradition. Examples are multiple, from the recluses who avoid all human contact to the individuals who receive ecstatic pleasure from the most aberrant forms of self-inflicted pain. But despite these aberrations, it would be misguided to seek the heart of asceticism or its primary psychological impetus in neuroses or psychoses. Yogic meditation, Christian monasticism, and Zen technique exemplify the major advances made by asceticism, both Eastern and Western, in self-understanding and the effort to lift repression and make the unconscious conscious. The psychological heart of asceticism seems to lie in a reaction against the purely theoretical, the doctrinal, or the abstract. Above all, the ascetic wishes to know through experience.

[*For related general discussions, see* Ordeal *and* Mortification. *For related historical discussions, see* Tapas; Saṃnyāsa; *and* Monasticism, *article on* Christian Monasticism.]

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Many works deal with asceticism in specific religious traditions. Outstanding is Mircea Eliade's *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, 2d ed. (Princeton, 1969), which discusses a wide range of ascetic practices in India and Tibet. A classic collection of information and observation, readable if not always credible, is John Campbell Oman's *The Mystics, Ascetics, and Saints of India: A Study of Sadhvism* (London, 1903). Sukumar Dutt's *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India: Their History and Their Contribution to Indian Culture* (London, 1962) is excellent, though only one of several related works by the author. D. T. Suzuki's *The Training of a Zen Buddhist Monk* (Kyoto, 1934) is a classic by Zen's most famous representative in the West. For the Christian tradition, Walter Nigg's *Vom Geheimnis der Mönche* (Zurich, 1953), translated by Mary Ilford as *Warriors of God* (New York, 1959), is a very readable, often insightful account of the ascetic saints, particularly those who founded religious orders. Owen Chadwick, in *Western Asceticism* (London, 1958), has selected and edited a collection of very useful primary source materials also representative of the Roman Catholic tradition. The various essays by Max Weber on the social psychology of asceticism, translated and edited by Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (Oxford, 1958), are pioneering and perceptive. J. Moussaieff Masson's "The Psychology of the Ascetic," *Journal of Asian Studies* 35 (August 1976): 611–625, is a one-sided but interesting article that sees the ascetic as essentially psychotic.

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ASCLEPIUS. *See* Asklepios.

ASHANTI RELIGION. *See* Akan Religions.

ASH'ARĪ, AL- (AH 260–324/874–935 CE), more fully Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Ismā'īl ibn Abī Bishr Isḥāq; Muslim theologian and founder of the tradition of Muslim theology known as Ash'arīyah. He is commonly referred to by his followers as the Master, Abū al-Ḥasan, and he is sometimes referred to by his opponents as Ibn Abī Bishr.

Life and Works. Very little is known concerning al-Ash'arī's life. He was for some time an adherent of the Mu'tazilī school and a disciple of al-Jubbā'ī (d. 915), but at some point, probably prior to 909, he rejected the teachings of the Mu'tazilah in favor of the more conservative dogma of the traditionalists *(ahl al-ḥadīth).* He renounced the Mu'tazilah publicly during the Friday prayer service in the congregational mosque of Basra and thereafter wrote extensively against the doctrines of his erstwhile fellows and in defense of his new position, for which he had become quite well known by 912/3. Sometime later he moved to Baghdad, where he remained until the end of his life.

Some hundred works are attributed to al-Ash'arī in the medieval sources (see McCarthy, 1953, pp. 211–230), of which no more than the following six seem to have survived.

1. *Maqālāt al-Islāmīyīn* (Theological Opinions of the Muslims) is a lengthy work setting forth the diverse opinions of Muslim religious thinkers; its two separate (and largely repetitious) parts likely represent two originally distinct works, the first of which may have been substantially complete prior to al-Ash'arī's conversion.

2. His *Risālah ilā ahl al-thaghr bi-Bāb al-Abwāb* (Epistle to the People of the Frontier at Bāb al-Abwāb [Darband]) is a brief compendium of his teachings, composed shortly after his conversion.

3. *Al-luma'* (The Concise Remarks) is a short, general compendium or *summa* that was evidently the most popular, if not the most important, of al-Ash'arī's theological writings; commentaries were written on the

Luma' by al-Bāqillānī (d. 1013) and Ibn Fūrak (d. 1015) and a refutation of it, *Naqd al-Luma'* (Critique of the *Concise Remarks*), by the Mu'tazilī *qāḍī* ("judge") 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Hamadānī (d. 1024). The evidence of direct citations of the *Luma'* made by al-Ash'arī's followers seems to indicate that there were originally two recensions of the work, of which the one available at present is the shorter.

4. *Al-īmān* (Belief) is a short work on the nature of belief.

5. *Al-ibānah 'an uṣūl al-diyānah* (The Clear Statement on the Fundamental Elements of the Faith) is a polemical and apologetic exposition of basic dogma, ostensibly written against the Mu'tazilah and the followers of Jahm ibn Ṣafwān (d. 745), but its formally traditionalist style suggests that this work was composed as a kind of apology to justify al-Ash'arī's own orthodoxy after the Ḥanābilah refused to recognize him as an adherent of traditionalist doctrine.

6. *Al-ḥathth 'alā al-baḥth* (The Exhortation to Investigation) is a polemical apology for the use of speculative reasoning and formal terminology in theological discussion directed against the radical traditionalists. Most likely composed later than the *Ibānah*, this work has been published several times under the title *Istiḥsān al-khawḍ fī 'ilm al-kalām* (The Vindication of the Science of *Kalām*), but the correct title, given in Ibn 'Asākir's and Ibn Farḥūn's lists of al-Ash'arī's writings, appears in a recently discovered copy of the work.

A number of other works are quoted with some frequency by later followers of the school of al-Ash'arī, among them his commentary on the Qur'ān, perhaps originally composed before his conversion; *Al-mūjiz* (The Epitome); *Al-'amad fī al-ru'yah* (The Pillars concerning [God's] Visibility), a work on the visibility of God; *Īḍāḥ al-burhān* (The Clarification of Demonstration); and *Al-ajwibah al-miṣrīyah* (The Egyptian Responsa), as well as various *majālis* or *amālī*, notes or minutes taken from his lectures.

Though it is clear that al-Ash'arī converted from Mu'tazilī theology to a more conservative, "orthodox" doctrine that he himself identified with that of the traditionalists, the precise nature of this conversion and the character of his teaching have always been the subject of much debate. It is obvious that he changed his adherence from one basic set of dogmatic theses to another, shifting, for example, from the Mu'tazilī thesis that since God is altogether incorporeal he cannot be seen, to one that God is somehow visible and will be visibly manifest to the blessed in the next life. Yet al-Ash'arī's claim that he taught the doctrine of the traditionalists was vehemently rejected by the more conservative of them, particularly the Ḥanābilah, whose approbation and support he had expected to receive but who looked upon him as an unreconstructed rationalist. Hostility between the Ḥanābilah and the followers of al-Ash'arī continued unabated for many centuries, sometimes erupting into civil disturbances, and the polemic and counterpolemic of later supporters and opponents of Ash'arī doctrine tended to obscure the basic issues somewhat, as current attitudes were often projected backward onto the founder himself. Against Ḥanbalī accusations that al-Ash'arī had changed some of his views but not his basic attitude, some later apologists, most notably Ibn 'Asākir (d. 1176) and al-Subkī (d. 1370), depict al-Ash'arī as a wholehearted traditionalist. Most of those who taught or supported al-Ash'arī's doctrine, like the Shāfi'ī *qāḍī* and jurisconsult Abū al-Ma'ālī 'Azīzī ibn 'Abd al-Malik (d. 1100) in his apology against the Ḥanbalī extremists, held that al-Ash'arī taught a doctrine intermediate between the rationalizing theology of the Mu'tazilah and the anthropomorphizing fundamentalism of the radical traditionalists. It is this "middle way" that is witnessed in al-Ash'arī's own writings and in those of most of the theologians who held allegiance to his school. This is also the view of most modern scholars, although a few have tended to adopt one or the other of the more extreme views.

From the works available to us, two points are clear. First of all, not only did al-Ash'arī give up the characteristic dogmas of Mu'tazilī doctrine, but also, in taking the revelation (Qur'ān and *sunnah*) and the consensus of the Muslims as the primary foundations and criteria of basic dogma, he rejected the basic attitude of al-Jubbā'ī's school, namely that autonomous reason is the primary and, in most instances, the original and definitive source and judge of what is true in theology. Second, after his conversion, he continued to express, explain, and argue theological theses in the formal language of *kalām* theology in such a way as to give them logical coherence and a degree of conceptual clarity. The first stance set him at irreconcilable odds with his erstwhile fellows among the Mu'tazilah, while the second made him unacceptable to the radical traditionalists. It is thus that when he wrote the *Ibānah* to demonstrate his orthodoxy to the Ḥanābilah, al-Barbahārī (d. 941), one of the most widely respected Ḥanbalī teachers of the day, rejected the work out of hand because in it al-Ash'arī had not repudiated *kalām* reasoning, nor had he said anything incompatible with his own *kalām* analyses.

Basic Teachings. In its basic elements, the doctrine of al-Ash'arī is not wholly new. A beginning had been made several generations earlier toward the formation of a conservative, non-Mu'tazilī *kalām*, but its progress had been arrested in the aftermath of the *miḥnah* as a

result of the ascendancy of traditionalist anti-intellectualism during and immediately after the reign of the caliph al-Mutawakkil (847–861). Al-Ash'arī appropriated or adapted a number of elements from various earlier theologians. To a large extent his teaching follows and develops that of Ibn Kullāb (d. 855), who is regarded by later Ash'arī theologians as one of their own fellows (aṣḥāb). Al-Ash'arī's theory of human action, however, is based on a distinction previously formulated by Ḍirār ibn 'Amr (d. 815) and al-Najjār (d. toward the middle of the ninth century), while some of his discussion of the divine names probably depends upon al-Jubbā'ī. His doctrine on the Qur'ān regarding the distinction between the recitation and the copy on the one hand and the text as the articulate meaning that is read and understood on the other, though based on Ibn Kullāb, is regarded as original by later authorities. While al-Ash'arī's teaching can be viewed on one level as a synthesis and adaptation of elements already present in one form or another but not hitherto assembled into a single system, it is nonetheless true that out of these elements he constructed a new, conceptually integrated whole of his own.

According to al-Ash'arī, the Qur'ān and the teaching of the Prophet present a reasoned exposition of the contingency of the world and its dependence upon the deliberate action of a transcendent creator, which, though not expressed in formal language, is complete and rationally probative. Thus, in contrast to the Mu'tazilah, he holds that theological inquiry is not originated autonomously by the mind but is provoked by the claims of a prophet, and that it is because of the rational validity of the prophet Muḥammad's basic teaching that one must accept the entire revelation, including those dogmas that cannot be inferred on purely rational grounds (for example, that God will be visible in the next life), and submit unconditionally to the divine law. Undertaking such theological inquiry is morally obligatory not for any psychological or intellectual reason, but because God has commanded it, and the command is known only in the revelation. With regard to the revelation itself, al-Ash'arī stands in significant contrast to his followers insofar as he does not employ in any of the works that are available to us the common kalām proof for the existence of God, the basic form of which is found in Chrysostom and other patristic writers, but, rather, prefers an argument based entirely and directly on the text of the Qur'ān.

In his discussion of the nature of God and of creatures, al-Ash'arī employs a formal method based on the Arab grammarians' analysis of predicative sentences. He holds that predications are divided into three categories: (1) those that assert the existence of only the subject itself (al-nafs, nafs al-mawṣūf); (2) those that assert the existence of an "attribute" (ṣifah, ma'nā) distinct from the "self" of the subject as such; and (3) those that assert the existence of an action (fi'l) done by the subject. Since "knows" is not synonymous with "exists," the former must, when said of God, imply the existence of a cognition that is somehow distinct from his essential being (al-nafs). Following a common tradition, al-Ash'arī holds that God has seven basic "essential attributes": the ability to act (al-qudrah), cognition, volition, life, speech, sight, and hearing. Since "perdures" (bāq) is not synonymous with "exists," he adds to this list a distinct attribute of "perdurance" (al-baqā'). On the basis of the revelation al-Ash'arī also includes as eternal attributes God's hand(s) and face, which are neither understood anthropomorphically as bodily members nor reduced metaphorically to his self or to one of the seven basic eternal attributes. None of these attributes can be fully comprehended and explained by human understanding; each is distinct from the others and from God's "self," though it is true neither that they are identical with God's self nor that they are other than it.

Al-Ash'arī's view of creation is basically occasionalistic. Whatever exists and is not eternal, God creates, and its existence is his action. Among those events that take place in us, however, we distinguish those that we simply undergo from those that we do intentionally. The former are God's acts alone; the latter occur through an ability to act (bi-qudrah) created in us at the moment the act occurs and are formally referred to as kasb or iktisāb ("performance" or "doing"; these terms are commonly, but misleadingly, rendered by "acquisition"). What God wills, and only what he wills, comes to exist. Because he is subject to no rule his acts are just and ethically good as such. The objects of God's will are not coextensive with those of his command. The ethical values (aḥkām) of human actions are grounded unconditionally in God's command, license, and prohibition, and as God has already informed us, he will punish and/or reward us in the next life according to our obedience and disobedience in this life. There is no intrinsic relationship between men's actions and their status in the life to come; God does and will do what he wills, and what he wills is just by definition.

Method. Although al-Ash'arī did work out a comprehensive and coherent theology, he seems to have deliberately restricted the scope of his theological reasoning, which does not go much beyond the presentation of his fundamental theses in such a way that the propositions formally asserted are logically unambivalent on the basis of a rigid set of definitions and principles, and even these are not always explained and even less often argued in the texts. Rational arguments for individual

theses are set forth in their most elementary form, sometimes in the form of a Qur'ān citation and, again, on the basis of presuppositions that, even if stated, are not argued. Where argument is based on the authority of scripture, or where a citation of the Qur'ān alludes to and encapsulates a rational argument, the formal principles of the underlying exegesis are presumed known and accepted. Since countertheses and the arguments that support them are logically incompatible with the definitions and principles employed by al-Ash'arī, they are usually disposed of in a purely formal manner.

Al-Ash'arī's surviving dogmatic works are few and quite brief. For some questions, they can be supplemented by citations found in the works of his successors, but even though the later Ash'arī theologians had access to a large number of his writings, they are unable to state his position on a number of important issues. In some instances they do know Ibn Kullāb's teaching (for example, on whether or not God's essential attributes are denumerable), but sometimes the sources themselves explicitly recognize that what they offer as the teaching of al-Ash'arī is merely an inference or conjecture. It appears, then, that on a number of questions al-Ash'arī either refused to commit himself or had not carried his inquiry beyond an elementary level. His fundamental aim seems to have been simply to present the basic sense and truth of the primary Islamic dogmas so that they could be thematically possessed and appropriated in an unambiguous form and to distinguish them from heresy and unbelief in such a way that the error of the latter would be clearly understood and displayed.

Later Influence. How rapidly and how widely al-Ash'arī's theology was adopted by orthodox Muslims has been a matter of debate, as has the question of its ultimate significance in the religious and intellectual history of Sunnī Islam. Its early importance is witnessed by the treatment al-Ash'arī receives in Ibn al-Nadīm's bio-bibliographical encyclopedia, *Al-fihrist* (The Catalog), composed in 987–988, and in *Al-fiṣal fī al-milal* (Judgments on the Sects), a heresiographical work by the Ẓāhirī jurist and philosopher Ibn Ḥazm of Cordova (d. 1064). Certainly by the latter half of the eleventh century Ash'arī theology was upheld by the leading Shāfi'ī jurisconsults, and for the historian Ibn Khaldūn (d. 1406) it represents the mainstream of orthodox *kalām*. A number of Ṣūfīs, beginning already with several of the disciples of al-Ḥallāj (d. 922), were Ash'arī in systematic theology, employing *kalām* as a kind of conceptual, dogmatic foundation to their mystical thought, and others, such as al-Kalābādhī (d. 990), though not strictly Ash'arī in dogma, were influenced by Ash'arī teaching. Again, although the school of al-Mā-

turīdī (d. 944) always maintained its theological distinctiveness, Ash'arī influence appears in some of their works. Similarly, the influence of Ash'arī language and concepts can be detected even in some later Ḥanbalī *'aqīdah*s (outlines of basic doctrine), and in at least one case, the *Mu'tamad fī uṣūl al-dīn* (The Foundation concerning the Basic Doctrines) of the Ḥanbalī *qāḍī* Abū Ya'lā al-Farrā' (d. 1066), several formulations are taken over directly from the theological writings of al-Bāqillānī, a leading Ash'arī theologian of the preceding generation.

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ASH'ARĪYAH. The theological doctrine of the Ash'arīyah, the followers of al-Ash'arī, is commonly regarded as the most important single school of systematic theology in orthodox Islam. The school and its members are commonly referred to in Arabic as *al-ash'arīyah* and its members often as *al-ashā'irah* (the "Ash'arīs"). Ash'arī masters during the tenth and eleventh centuries CE most commonly refer to themselves and the school as *ahl al-ḥaqq* ("those who teach the true doctrine") or *ahl al-sunnah wa-al-jamā'ah* ("the adherents of the *sunnah* and the consensus [of the Muslim community]") and sometimes as *ahl al-taḥqīq* ("those whose doctrine is conceptually clear and verified"). It should be noted, however, that other groups, including some opponents of the Ash'arīyah, use the same expressions, and the first two in particular, to describe themselves. Ash'arīyah is not, as such, identified with any single juridical tradition *(madhhab)*; most Ash'arī theologians were Shāfi'ī, and some were famous as teachers of Shāfi'ī law, but a large number of them were Mālikī, the most famous being the Mālikī *qāḍī* ("judge") al-Bāqillānī.

The history of the school can be divided into two clearly distinguishable periods, the division falling about the beginning of the twelfth century CE. The first period, often referred to as that of classical Ash'arī theology, is characterized by the formal language, analysis, and argumentation of the Basran *kalām* employed by al-Ash'arī himself, while the second is characterized by the language, concepts, and formal logic of philosophy *(falsafah)*, that is, of the Islamic continuation of Greek philosophy. [See Falsafah.] The school received strong official support under the Seljuk vizier Niẓām al-Mulk (d. 1092), with many of its masters appointed to chairs of the Shāfi'ī law in the colleges *(madrasahs)* that he founded. Many scholars identify the acme of the school with the great Ash'arī masters of this period. Many, most notably Georges C. Anawati and Louis Gardet, have seen the introduction and adaptation of Aristotelian logic and concepts as analogous to the *via nova* of Western Scholastic theology and accordingly hold that the Ash'arī thinking of the later period is more sophisticated and more truly theological than that of the earlier period.

Principal Figures. We have very few concrete data concerning the teaching of al-Ash'arī's immediate disciples. Abū Bakr al-Qaffāl al-Shāshī, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bāhilī, and Abū Sahl al-Ṣa'lūkī are regularly cited in the theological writings of later Ash'arī thinkers, but the only theological work by one of his direct disciples that is known to have survived is the *Ta'wīl al-āyāt al-mushkilah* (The Interpretation of Difficult Verses) of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ṭabarī. In formulation and conception this work appears to follow the teaching of al-Ash'arī rigidly: the proof for the contingency of the world and the existence of God, for example, is not the one universally employed by the Ash'arīyah of succeeding generations, but depends directly on al-Ash'arī's *Al-luma'* (The Concise Remarks). The most important of al-Ash'arī's immediate disciples, however, was certainly al-Bāhilī; although al-Qaffāl's student al-Ḥalīmī (d. 1012) is cited with some frequency by later authorities, it is three students of al-Bāhilī who dominate Ash'arī thinking in the next two generations. These are the *qāḍī* Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī (d. 1013), Abū Bakr ibn Fūrak (d. 1015), and Abū Isḥāq al-Isfarā'īnī (d. 1027).

Several of al-Bāqillānī's theological writings have survived and are published: two compendia of moderate length, *Al-tamhīd* (The Introduction) and *Al-inṣāf* (The Equitable View), and a major work on the miraculous character of the Qur'ān, *I'jāz al-Qur'ān* (The Inimitability of the Qur'ān). Of his longest and most important work, *Hidāyat al-mustarshidīn* (The Guidance of Those Who Seek to Be Guided Aright), however, only a part, yet unpublished, of the section on prophecy is presently known. A number of important works that are commonly cited appear not to have survived at all, among them a tract on the ontology of attributes and predicates entitled *Mā yu'allal wa-mā lā yu'allal* (What Is Founded in an *'Illah* and What Is Not) and *Al-naqḍ al-kabīr* (The Major Critique), which is perhaps a longer recension of his *Naqḍ Al-naqḍ* (The Critique of *The Critique*), a work written in response to the *Naqḍ Al-luma'* (The Critique of [al-Ash'arī's] *Al-luma'*) composed by the great Mu'tazilī master 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 1024). Ibn Fūrak's *Bayān ta'wīl mushkil al-ḥadīth* (The Clear Interpretation of Difficult Traditions) was very popular in later times and survives in many copies, but among his dogmatic writings only a few short works, none of them published, are known to have survived. (The lengthy *Uṣūl al-dīn* [Basic Doctrines] contained in the Ayasofya collection of Istanbul and attributed to him in several European handbooks is by his grandson.) Of al-Isfarā'īnī's writings, only one short compendium *('aqīdah)*, yet unpublished, is known to have survived, although a large number of theological works are cited by later Ash'arī writers, among them *Al-jāmi'* (The *Summa*), *Al-mukhtaṣar* (The Abridged Compendium), *Al-waṣf wa-al-ṣifah* (Predications and Attributes), and *Al-asmā' wa-al-ṣifāt* (The Names and Attributes [of God]).

Among the Ash'arīyah of succeeding generations, the

principal figures some of whose theological works are available and in part published are 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī (d. 1037), who studied with al-Isfarā'īnī; Abū Bakr al-Bayhaqī (d. 1056), best known as a traditionist and jurisconsult; Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī (d. 1072), a student of both Ibn Fūrak and al-Isfarā'īnī, renowned as a teacher and writer on Sufism; his student Abū Sa'd al-Mutawallī (d. 1086), best known as a jurisconsult, and Abū Bakr al-Fūrakī (d. 1094), a grandson of Ibn Fūrak and son-in-law of al-Qushayrī. We have none of the theological writings of Abū al-Qāsim al-Isfarā'īnī (d. 1060), though his commentary on the *Mukhtaṣar* of Abū Isḥāq al-Isfarā'īnī is often cited along with others of his works. His disciple Abū al-Ma'ālī al-Juwaynī (d. 1085), known as Imām al-Ḥaramayn (Imam of the Holy Cities, that is, Mecca and Medina, to which he was forced to flee for a time), was not only one of the foremost Muslim theologians of any period but also the leading Shāfi'ī legist of his age.

A number of al-Juwaynī's dogmatic works have survived and are published, most important his *Irshād* (Guidance), the *Risālah al-niẓāmīyah* (The Short Tract for Niẓām [al-Mulk], twice published under the title *Al-'aqīdah al-niẓāmīyah*), and *Al-shāmil fī uṣūl al-dīn* (The Complete Compendium of the Basic Doctrines), which is a very extensive exposition *(taḥrīr)* of al-Bāqillānī's commentary on al-Ash'arī's *Al-luma'*. A significant portion of *Al-shāmil* is preserved, and the substance of the remainder survives in an abridgement of some two hundred folios by an unknown author, entitled *Al-kāmil fī ikhtiṣār Al-shāmil* (The Perfect Abridgement of *Al-shāmil*). Although the second major period of Ash'arī theology, already foreshadowed in some of al-Juwaynī's work, is inaugurated by his most famous student, al-Ghazālī, several of his disciples continued to pursue *kalām* in the traditional form, and their surviving works are of great importance as sources for our understanding of the development of the school in the classical period. These are the *Uṣūl al-dīn* (Basic Doctrines) by al-Kiyā' al-Harāsī (d. 1110), a highly respected jurisconsult, and *Al-ghunyah fī al-kalām* (Sufficiency in *Kalām*) by Abū al-Qāsim al-Anṣārī (d. 1118), of whose commentary on the *Irshād* of al-Juwaynī a significant fragment is also preserved.

Doctrines and Methods of the Classical Period. The school of al-Ash'arī universally holds that the sources of theological knowledge are, in order of priority, the Qur'ān, the *sunnah*, the consensus of the Muslim community, and human reason, and their basic teaching varies little from one master to another during the classical period. God's being is eternal *(qadīm)* and unconditioned; in his "self" *(nafs, dhāt)* and in his "essential attributes" *(ṣifāt al-nafs)*, his nonexistence is impossi-

ble. Every being other than God and his essential attributes exists as an action of his that is finite, corporeal, and temporal, and therefore altogether unlike him. Temporal beings are referred to as God's "attributes of action" *(ṣifāt afʿālihi)*, since it is they that are asserted to exist when any predicate of action such as "creates" or "sustains" is said of him.

Though questioning the denumerability of the "essential attributes" of God, the Ash'arīyah all recognize seven principal ones: life, cognition, volition, the ability to act, sight, hearing, and speaking. They hold these to be real *(thābitah)* and distinguishable, as what is asserted by "wills" is distinct from what is asserted by "knows," and so forth; they are neither simply identical with God's "self" nor are they other than it, since "other" implies separability and therefore contingency. The objects of his ability to create are infinite and are known to him as such. What he knows will be, he wills to be, and nothing comes to be that he does not will; whatever comes to be, comes to be through his ability to act when and as his will determines.

As God is one, so each of his essential attributes is one: he knows an infinity of objects in a single, eternal cognition and wills the existence of an indefinite number of beings in a single, eternal volition. Since he has neither needs nor desires, he cannot be said to act for a motive or reason. Neither his acts nor his commands can be rationalized; since he is the absolute Lord of creation, they are right and just *('adl)* simply because they are his, independently of any apparent good or harm they may constitute or cause with respect to any creature. [*See* Attributes of God, *article on* Islamic Concepts.]

God makes himself known to the believer in a special way in the Qur'ān, and one of the issues most vehemently contested between the Ash'arīyah and their opponents, both the Mu'tazilah and the Ḥanābilah, is the validity and sense of the thesis "the Qur'ān is the uncreated speech of God." According to the Ash'arī analysis, "speech" or "speaking" *(kalām)* refers to an interior intention that is materially signified and expressed by spoken, written, and remembered expressions *(ḥurūf)*. God's eternal attribute of speaking is one and undivided: it becomes differentiated into statements, commands, and so on in its material articulation in a particular language by means of which it is revealed and manifested. Thus the believer's recitation *(qirā'ah)* of the Qur'ān, like the written copy, is created, but what is recited *(maqrū')*, that is, the intention made present and understood, is the uncreated speaking of God.

The Qur'ān is miraculous not merely because it foretold and foretells future events, but in a unique way because of the sublimity of its rhetorical expression. Ac-

cording to the Ash'arīyah God is properly described only by those expressions "by which he has described himself," that is, those given in the Qur'ān and in the tradition. [See I'jāz for further discussion.] Although God's being is beyond the grasp of human intelligence, these predicates, known as "his most beautiful names" (asmā'uhu al-ḥusnā), are known to be true and adequate. The Ash'arīyah analyze them systematically, first, in order to reduce them referentially to God's "self," to one of his essential attributes, or to one of his "attributes of action," and second, to examine their specific connotations. That God is in some real sense visible they hold to be rationally demonstrable; that he will be seen by the believers in the next life is known only by revelation.

Ontological bases of Ash'arī thought. According to the Ash'arī theologians of the classical period, the world consists of two kinds of primary entities: atoms, which are conjoined to form bodies, and the entitative "attributes" or "accidents" that reside in these atoms, each of which contains a single discrete instance of each class (jins) of accident or its contrary. The atoms perdure through many instants, but the "accidents," since they exist for only an instant, are continually created anew by God. Events are the coming to be of entities, and since God causes the existence of every entity, the causation of one event by another (tawallud) is denied. The system is thus fundamentally occasionalistic, and the interrelationships between distinct entities as they exist separately in temporal succession are little discussed as such in the available texts. [See Occasionalism.]

Events that are properly described as human actions (aksāb) are defined as those that are the immediate objects of a "created ability to act" (qudrah muḥdathah) and are limited to those events that take place in the agent as and insofar as they are intended by the agent. As entities they are ascribed to God, as his action; under other descriptions they qualify the part, and only the part, of the agent in which they occur and are so ascribed to him as his action. The human agent is properly said to be able to perform the act he performs only at the moment he actually performs it; only at this instant does God create in him the ability to perform it. On this basis the Ash'arī theologians are accused of holding that individuals are in some instances commanded by God to do what they are not able to do (taklīf mā lā yuṭāq). Though this is formally true, appropriate distinctions are made between an agent's not being able to do something (ghayr qādir) and his being unable ('ājiz) to do it, and accordingly between voluntary omission (tark) and involuntary omission. This analysis of human actions was radically opposed by the

Mu'tazilah, who considered it to be deterministic. Viewed from the standpoint of the Ash'arī school, however, the issue is not one of freedom and determinism, but of whether or not any event can occur independently of God's will and action.

In fact, the question of determinism is treated ambivalently in most of the texts we have. Those events that occur regularly as the apparent consequences of human actions are not considered as true effects of the basic act, but are created by God occasionalistically according to the consistency of the "convention" ('ādah) that he freely follows in ordering material events. Miracles are events that God has created with a radical departure from the sequence in which he usually makes things happen, in order to verify the divine origin of a prophet's message. Belief (īmān) is essentially the assent (taṣdīq) of the believer to the truth of God's message transmitted by the prophet, and one in whom this assent occurs is by definition a believer (mu'min). The assent requires, but is distinct from, cognition and entails, but is distinct from, the performance of what God commands. God commands the belief of the unbeliever but does not will it (otherwise he would believe). The obedience of the believers is neither the cause nor the necessary condition of their reward in the life to come; it is simply a criterion arbitrarily decreed by God. [See Free Will and Predestination, article on Islamic Concept.]

Ash'arī methods. The Ash'arī school disapproves of taqlīd, the unreflecting assent to religious dogmas by simple acquiescence to recognized authority. They hold that, at least on a basic level, the believer ought to know the sense and coherence of what he holds to be true and should rationally understand the validity of its foundation in the Qur'ān and the teaching of the Prophet. According to the traditionalist method, creedal and theological statements are established and verified through the collection of a consistent body of citations from the Qur'ān, the Prophet, and recognized authorities among the first generations of Muslims, so that any deviant thesis can be excluded on grounds of contextual incompatibility with these canonical sources. By contrast, the Ash'arī method proceeds to a formal, logical, and conceptual analysis of the terms of each thesis on the basis of a rigid set of definitions and distinctions, axioms and principles, which both explain the elementary sense and foundation of the thesis and exclude any counterthesis as unfounded or inconsistent in some respect.

Among the most conspicuous aspects of the Ash'arī texts are the formalism that dominates both their expression and their intention and the narrow delimitation of topics as defined by the particular thesis. Since

the Ash'arīyah, unlike the Mu'tazilah, did not consider it necessary to found their theology autonomously on philosophical reasoning, the theoretical principles and implications of their doctrine are not extensively set forth in the texts. One begins from and always returns to the basic definitions and distinctions, which are presented and argued in what often appears to be a rather peremptory manner. Even where positions are argued at great length in terms of a variety of questions and against a number of counterpositions, as in al-Juwaynī's *Al-shāmil*, the discussion of the basic issue seldom advances much beyond its original statement. Consequently, and especially given the limited sources currently available, for a number of important questions it is extremely difficult to interpret what is explicitly presented within the broader implications of the question. For this reason, the Ash'arī *kalām* of the classical period has been considered chiefly a dialectic exercise and one that is mostly, if not entirely, apologetic in character. The formal disputation (*munāẓarah*) was from the outset a central element in the study and cultivation of the religious sciences in Islam, and as in the case of Western Scholasticism, it largely determined the literary expression of Muslim theology.

A number of leading Ash'arī theologians wrote works on dialectics (*jadal*). Although the form of their presentation is often dialectical, few if any classical Ash'arī works are dialectically apologetic in the strict sense of the term, for both the question and the argument are always presented and elaborated within the narrow context of the formal and theoretical presuppositions of the school's own doctrine, not those presupposed by the counterthesis or any other that might presumably be acceptable to both disputants. Even so, their Muslim opponents, at first chiefly the Mu'tazilah and later the Karrāmīyah, had a significant catalytic effect on the development of Ash'arī theology in the classical period: they were not simply a source of countertheses that had to be dealt with, but were also significant figures within the religious and intellectual milieu, and as such were, along with the Ḥanābilah, competitors for the allegiance of the Muslim community and in some cases for patronage too.

Philosophical problems. It was apparently under pressure from the Mu'tazilī school of Basra, then approaching its zenith, that Ash'arī theology made rapid advances in sophistication toward the beginning of the eleventh century. Concepts that had remained somewhat vague or inadequately elaborated in the work of al-Ash'arī and his immediate disciples underwent revision and redefinition, while principles and constructs that had not been sufficiently thought through were redefined and the system as a whole brought into more rigorous coherence. In the process, a certain diversity of teaching became apparent in the works of the leading masters. The distinction between the necessarily existent (the eternal) and the contingent (*al-muḥdath*, the temporal) was fundamental.

Beyond this, most of the Ash'arī theologians of the classical period understood being univocally, to the extent that terms meaning "entity" (*shay'*, *dhāt*, *mawjūd*) were applied to the atoms and their accidental properties alike. The Ash'arīyah of this period were basically nominalists. God determines the various kinds of beings, creating each with its distinctive characteristics; the names of the classes or kinds of things by which their individual instances are called are given originally in God's instruction (*tawqīf*), not by human convention. The basic adjectival or descriptive terms that ascribe distinct or accidental properties to things are derived from the names of those properties, as *'ālim* (knows) is derived from *'ilm* (cognition) to describe a subject in which a cognition exists.

The question of what qualifications or predicates of a being are or are not grounded (*mu'allalah*) in distinct properties was the subject of considerable discussion. Because the foundation of the system lay in its analytic formalism, problems inevitably arose concerning the universality of many terms. These were especially acute since they held that terms that name both human and divine attributes (*life, cognition, volition*, for example) are basically univocal, while asserting at the same time that God and his eternal attributes are wholly unlike created beings and so belong to no class (*jins*) of entities: we know that these terms name God's attributes truly and adequately because they are used by God in the Qur'ān. Formulations to the effect that God's will, for example, "is a volition unlike volitions" stated but did not adequately resolve the problem.

Following a formula found already in al-Ash'arī, Ibn Fūrak and others held that things simply "deserve" (*istahaqqa*) to be called by the terms that describe them properly and truly. Any subject in which there exists a cognition, for example, "deserves" to be described by the expression *knows*, and the cognition is, in each case, the reason or cause of the predication (*'illat al-waṣf*); what they have in common (*jāmi'*) is this cause or reason. What any two cognitions, on the other hand, have in common is simply that they deserve to be named by the expression *cognition*. Some authorities will speak of their having the same "particular characteristics" (*khawāṣṣ, khaṣā'iṣ*). Al-Bāqillānī, however, adapting a concept from his Mu'tazilī contemporaries, posits the reality of non-entitative attributes or "states" (*aḥwāl*) of things, which are the referential or ontological basis of the universality of descriptive terms. In this

way, every cognition, whether created or uncreated (eternal), is qualified by a state of "being a cognition" *('ilmīyah)*, and every subject in which there exists a cognition is qualified by a state of "being cognizant" *('ālimīyah)*. Similarly a human action *(kasb)* is qualified by a state of being a human action *(kasbīyah)*. Among the Ash'arī masters of the classical period, only al-Juwaynī accepted and defended al-Bāqillānī's concept of "states."

There were a number of other difficulties and differences among the Ash'arī theologians of the period, though these are less clearly presented in the available sources. The school agreed, for example, that God is able to create an infinite number of individuals belonging to any given class of beings, but did not agree as to whether or not he is able to create an infinity of classes other than those he has actually created. The question of whether, and in what way, God's will is general or particular with regard to its objects was debated, but exactly how the problem was treated by the various authors remains unclear. Likewise, al-Juwaynī, and he alone, it would seem, held that God's knowledge of creatures is general and not particular, but again the available sources do not give us an adequate view of his thought on the question. Though the same basic distinctions are made with regard to the createdness of human actions, and the same set of basic propositions are formally maintained by all authorities, there are differences concerning the way the concrete relationships between the elements involved in human actions are understood. Some, among them al-Juwaynī, hold that the relationship between the created ability to act and its object is simply intentional. The antecedent or concomitant actuality of motivation and volition is seldom discussed in the available texts, since it is not formally pertinent, given the way the basic question of the createdness of human actions is posed and treated. The most conspicuous deviation from the normal form of the school's teaching in this period is found in al-Juwaynī's *Risālah* (or *'Aqīdah*) dedicated to Niẓām al-Mulk. Although he maintains the basic theological dogmas of the school, the way in which they are presented and explained is new and, in the case of some major elements, irreconcilable not only with the teaching of his predecessors but also with that of his own major theological writings. In many respects the work anticipates the fundamental trend of the following period.

Later Ash'arīyah. With the rapidly increasing assimilation of ancient and Hellenistic learning, both scientific and philosophical, and its integration into the intellectual life of Islam, the change in both language and conceptualization that characterizes the second major period of Ash'arī theology was inevitable: the urgent

need of Sunnī orthodoxy to counter the growing influence of Ismā'īlī gnosticism and of the philosophers *(falāsifah)*, particularly the Neoplatonism of Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), made it imperative. The three most creative theologians of this period were al-Ghazālī (d. 1111), al-Shahrastānī (d. 1153), a student of Abū al-Qāsim al-Anṣārī, and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1209). The major Ash'arī texts surviving from this period are more numerous and also more diverse than those of the earlier school, since many of them, especially those of al-Ghazālī and al-Rāzī, enjoyed great popularity over the centuries, while the earlier works, rapidly outdated, became progressively more remote in concept and expression. The apologetic and polemic of the Ash'arī theologians of this period engage their rationalistic opponents directly, not merely in their own language, but on purely rational grounds, as in al-Ghazālī's famous refutation of Ibn Sīnā's philosophy, *Tahāfut al-falāsifah* (The Incoherence of the Philosophers), and in al-Shahrastānī's *Muṣāra'at al-falāsifah* (Wrestling the Philosophers Down). Where the formal and theoretical principles of their doctrine were not much discussed in the texts of the classical period, they are now set forth in extensive detail.

The general attitudes of the three great masters of the period and the character of their thought manifest significant differences, however. Al-Ghazālī's view of the nature and value of formal, systematic theology, in particular, was not shared by other Ash'arī thinkers either before or after him. In the wake of intellectual and religious crises, he became convinced that the only valid and certain knowledge of God is given in direct mystical experience. As a result, where the common Ash'arī tradition held that systematic theology furnishes a sound and valuable, if not essential, conceptual foundation for one's belief, al-Ghazālī insists that it is wholly inadequate. Since it cannot be grounded in autonomous human reason, moreover, it is at best founded in *taqlīd* and, he concludes, has no valid function other than as a dialectical apologetic. He did, however, produce two *kalām* compendia in the traditional form, the *Iqtiṣād fī al-i'tiqād* (The Just Mean in Belief) and the *Qawā'id al-'aqā'id* (Foundations of the Creeds, which is book 2 of the first part of his *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn* [The Vitalization of the Religious Sciences]). While these works by no means embody his entire theology, they are demonstrative of his dogmatic thought as it relates to the Ash'arī tradition.

In these works, as in al-Shahrastānī's *Nihāyat al-iqdām fī 'ilm al-kalām* (The Furthermost Steps in the Science of *Kalām*), one sees not so much a sudden and radical break with the past as an effort to rethink and recast the basic dogmas within an expanded theoretical

framework, one that required and produced a definite, and ultimately definitive, movement away from the rigid kind of analysis and close restriction of topics that had characterized the school since its foundation. The traditional formulation of the basic dogmatic theses is thus consistently maintained, but the exposition and argumentation of most of them is in many respects new and often impressive.

Against what they regard as an impoverished conception of God's being held by the *falāsifah*, al-Ghazālī and al-Shahrastānī set forth an understanding of the traditional seven essential attributes that, in taking them more as aspects of God's "essence" than as distinct properties, is somewhat analogous to the position of the Mu'tazilī school of Basra. The relation between God's eternal power, knowledge, and will and their temporal objects is more thoroughly and explicitly explored than in earlier Ash'arī texts and in different, more Aristotelian terms. God's speaking is conceived in terms akin to cognition, with all modalities of interior speech tending to be reduced to propositions. The attribute of "perdurance" *(al-baqā')*, previously rejected by a number of Ash'arī masters, is considered simply as a negative concept ("perdures" = "does not cease to exist") by al-Ghazālī, who explicitly rejects the earlier conception of the ontological grounding of attributes.

Where the classical doctrine of the school had held that all beings other than God are corporeal, the Ash'arī theologians now recognize the existence of a host of "spirits" *(arwāḥ)* belonging to the "upper world" *(al-'ālam al-a'lā)*. The atomistic conception of material bodies continues to be stated in much the same terms as before, but on another level, living beings tend to be talked of not as mere composites of atoms and their discrete "accidents," but as beings having a real, essential unity. The conception of God as the sole cause of the existence of every contingent being is maintained, though now discussed and argued with somewhat different terminology, as is the thesis of the createdness of human actions, which continues to be set forth on the basis of the same set of distinctions as in the texts of the classical period. The occasionalistic language that characterizes classical Ash'arī writing is formally retained, but its radical tone is to some extent mitigated and the function of secondary causes plainly recognized.

The adoption of Aristotelian psychology is of signal importance. The changing perspective of the Ash'arī *kalām* is perhaps most conspicuously exemplified in al-Ghazālī's discussion of what is morally good and bad, right and wrong. The traditional Ash'arī conception of ethical valuations in terms of obligation based in God's unconditioned command, license, and prohibition he rationalizes through a sort of utilitarianism of virtue:

one ought always to act for his own ultimate good (that is, that to be achieved in the next life), and this is uniquely made known in God's revelation. He accounts for good *(ḥasan)* and bad *(qabīḥ)* not directly in what is commanded and forbidden but, harmonizing Ṣūfī teaching with an Aristotelian notion of virtue, in terms of ends *(aghrāḍ)*, where moral perfection is measured by one's nearness to God.

If in their *kalām* works al-Ghazālī and al-Shahrastānī seem to have harmonized or juxtaposed disparate conceptual frameworks in a synthetic unity, this is not the case with al-Rāzī, who maintained a profound commitment to the Muslim philosophical tradition. He wrote extensively on philosophy (as well as on medicine and other sciences), and in his principal *kalām* works, *Ma'ālim uṣūl al-dīn* (The Landmarks of Fundamental Doctrine) and the much longer *Kitāb al-arba'īn fī uṣūl al-dīn* (The Forty [Questions] concerning Fundamental Doctrine), as also in his monumental commentary on the Qur'ān, we find Ash'arī theology almost fully adapted to the conceptual universe of the philosophical tradition. Indeed, it seems possible that in some places al-Rāzī may follow his philosophical sources (chiefly Ibn Sīnā) so far as to compromise one or more of the fundamental theological tenets of the school. The number and diversity of his works are so great, however, that with the present state of our knowledge it is not possible to come to a firm assessment of his thought.

After al-Rāzī, Ash'arī theology is continued chiefly in a series of manuals eclectically dependent upon the great writers of the past. The most famous of these, *Al-mawāqif fī uṣūl al-dīn* (The Stages in Fundamental Doctrine) of 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 1355), has continued to serve as a textbook on theology to the present day. Among the various commentaries written on it, the most important and widely used is that of al-Jurjānī (d. 1413), and together with this text the *Mawāqif* has gone through a large number of printed editions since the early nineteenth century.

Because of the differences in language and conceptualization between the Ash'arī theology of the classical period and that of later times, especially after al-Rāzī, it is impossible to define or characterize the tradition in terms of a single way of conceiving, formulating, and dealing with theological and metaphysical problems. The original success of Ash'arī theology stemmed from the kind of coherent balance it achieved between rational understanding and a religious sense that was rooted in a basically conservative reading of the Qur'ān and the *sunnah*. Its development followed the religious and intellectual evolution of Sunnī Islam. The unity of the school lies largely in its common adherence to a

basic set of theses, which sets it apart from other Muslim schools of speculative theology, such as the Māturīdīyah, on the one hand, and in its conceptual rationalization of these theses, which sets it apart from the more rigid traditionalists, on the other. Above all, it is the tradition's sense of its own continuity, beginning with the immediate disciples of al-Ashʿarī, that allows it to be identified by itself and others as Ashʿarī.

[For further discussion of Ashʿarī theology, see Kalām and the biographies of al-Ashʿarī, al-Ghazālī, al-Ījī, Niẓām al-Mulk, al-Rāzī, and al-Shahrastānī. For discussion of related trends in Islamic theology, see Muʿtazilah; Ḥanābilah; and the biographies of Abū al-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf and al-Māturīdī.]

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ASHERAH. *See* Athirat.

ASHER BEN YEHI'EL (c. 1250–1327), known as Rabbenu ("our teacher") Asher or as R'oSH, the acronym of that epithet; Talmudist and rabbinic legal authority. Born and educated in Germany, Asher was the leading disciple of the outstanding German rabbinic scholar of his age, Me'ir ben Barukh of Rothenburg. The

turbulence disrupting German Jewish life impelled him to emigrate in 1303. He eventually settled in Toledo; that a man of such alien background was accepted as head of the Toledo rabbinical court reflects the power of his learning and his personality.

In Spain, Asher was immediately embroiled in a *Kulturkampf* over the study of philosophy. The product of an exclusively Talmud-centered curriculum, he did not fully understand all the issues involved (he declined to answer a legal query concerning the astrolabe because, he said, "It is an instrument with which I am not familiar"). Asher hesitated to support the ban promulgated by Shelomoh ben Avraham Adret proscribing the study of Greek philosophy until age twenty-five, because this implied that such study was permissible later, and he believed it should be prohibited throughout life. He ultimately endorsed the ban to ensure that failure to do so would not be misunderstood as support for philosophy. His was the most conservative position taken by any major protagonist in the conflict.

Asher's legal works, which emerged from intensive study of the Talmud, are of three kinds: (1) commentaries on two orders of the Mishnah and several Talmudic tractates; (2) *tosafot*, brief excursuses on specific problems in the Talmudic text, which brought together recent German and Spanish insights; and (3) a codification called *Pisqei ha-R'osh*. Following the order of the Talmud and covering most of its tractates, *Pisqei ha-R'osh* integrated the Talmudic argument with decisions of post-Talmudic authorities to arrive at the operative law. Asher condemned the practice of rendering legal decisions based on Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah* by those not expert in the Talmudic sources.

Asher's *responsa*, or replies to legal questions, are among the more important and influential of this genre. He was frequently called upon to interpret communal ordinances and their relationship to classical Jewish law, and to decide which local Spanish customs should be honored (e.g., the use of capital or corporal punishment in cases of blasphemy or informing) and which should be opposed. *Responsum* 55 moves from the specific issue, concerning a wife's right to dispose of her assets as she desired through a will, to a significant debate over general principles of jurisprudence. Asher rejected the use of philology, philosophical logic, and commonsense argumentation in order to defend the integrity of the halakhic decision-making process, insisting that philosophy and Torah are "two opposites, irreconcilable, that will never dwell together."

A bridge between the great rabbinic centers of Germany and of Spain, Asher and his sons had a lasting impact on the development of Jewish law. One son, Yehdah, succeeded him as rabbi in Toledo; another,

Ya'aqov, used his father's legal oeuvre as the basis for his own *magnum opus*, the *Arba'ah ṭurim*, a code of operative Jewish law with a new structure independent of the Talmud and earlier codes, which became the basis for Yosef Karo's *Shulḥan 'arukh*.

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ASHES are the irreducible dry residue of fire. They may be burnt offerings, such as the cremation of a human body, the sacrificial burning of an animal, or the ritual burning of a plant. Ashes have religious significance as the substance remaining after the divine living energy of sacred fire has departed from a living being or has acted to purge, purify, destroy, volatilize, punish, consume, sublimate, or extract the essence of some created thing. Ashes variously manifest and represent the residue or effect of sacred fire in its manifold creative and negating functions. As hierophanies of power and as sacred symbols, ashes are connected with rites of penitence, mourning, sacrifice, fertility, purification, healing, and divination.

In certain myths dealing with origins, ashes are the material from which things are made. For example, the San depict the Milky Way as being made of ashes, as do the Macoví, for whom the Milky Way is made of the ashes of the Celestial Tree. In Aztec myth mankind itself is made of ashes. Likewise, participants in the Ash Wednesday rite of the Roman Catholic church are reminded penitentially that they are but the stuff of ashes: "Memento, homo, quia cinis es; in cinerem reverteris."

Ashes, together with any other residue left once the sacrificial fire has extracted the living essence of an offering, are manifestations of sacred renunciation. In certain spiritual disciplines, the rubbing of ashes on the body represents the renunciation or burning up of energic or libidinal attachments to life for the sake of spiritual development or enlightenment. For example, in Hindu mythology the god Śiva, the divine paradigm of yogins, burns up all the other gods with a glance from his third eye, which possesses the vision that penetrates to the essential nullity of all forms. Śiva then rubs the gods' ashes on his body. The yogins rub the ashes of the sacred fire on their bodies as a symbol of having sublimated the fiery power of procreation or lust (*kāma*). The whiteness of the ashes is referred to as the glow of the ashes of the yogins' semen.

Ashes, by connection with the cleansing power of the divine fiery energy, have the power to purify. For example, in the Red Heifer ritual of the Hebrews the ashes of the sacrificed animal's body are mixed with water and sprinkled on a person who is ritually unclean from contact with a corpse. Ritual cleanliness is also achieved by the brahmans in India by rubbing the body with ashes or bathing it in ashes before performing religious rites.

Covering one's clothes and body in ashes is a part of various rituals of mourning, humiliation, and atonement. Wearing ashes exteriorizes or manifests spiritual states of loss, sorrow, emptiness, or worthlessness before the divine power. For example, in the Arunta tribe the widow of the deceased covers herself during mourning rites in the ashes of her husband. In the Bible Job humbles himself before Yahveh, saying, "I knew you then only by hearsay; but now, having seen you with my own eyes, I retract all I have said, and in dust and ashes I repent" (*Jb.* 42:5f.).

The pattern, or tendency, of fiery divine life-forces is interpreted by means of the pattern of ashes made during divinatory rites. The Maya Indians in Yucatán, for example, use this type of oracle to determine the particular divinity responsible for a child's life. Possibly the idea behind this practice is similar to the idea of various North American Indian peoples who regard the life patterns in the palm and fingertips of a person's hand as traces of the divine energy ordinarily manifested as wind or breath.

Finally, ashes as the residue of life manifest the fiery divine life-force itself and are used in fertility rites to stimulate the life energy of crops and flocks. Thus in many European rites, such as those celebrated at Easter and on Saint John's Day, a human figure of straw representing the vegetation spirit is burned, and the ashes are scattered on the fields to stimulate the growth of crops. Likewise, in ancient Rome, the ashes from sacred fires of animal sacrifices were fed to flocks in order to stimulate their fertility and their production of milk.

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ASHI (c. 352–424/7), the leading sixth-generation Babylonian amora. A student of Kahana, Ashi was reputedly based in the city of Mata Meḥasya for sixty years. He served as judge of a local Jewish court and as community administrator, positions that enabled him to implement rabbinic law in many areas; he expounded scripture and taught oral law to disciples, whom he trained in his court, and to other Jews at large, whom he tried to persuade to follow rabbinic norms. His reported ability to enforce Sabbath and other laws previously not widely enforced by rabbis suggests that he had greater impact on Jewry than his predecessors. Disciples and colleagues in particular revered him and believed that he was respected by the exilarch (the lay Jewish leadership sponsored by the Persian government) and even in the court of the Persian king.

A Talmudic account mentions that Ashi ordered a crumbling synagogue to be pulled down but had his bed put into it to ensure that it be completely rebuilt (B.T., *B.B.* 3b). This story suggests not only a belief in his power but also the means to which he had to resort to activate the community. The dictum that he "combined Torah and greatness" conveys the rabbinic view that he took over prerogatives of, and even instructed, the exilarch. But this is inconsistent with sources that depict rabbis as solicitous of the exilarch's staff. In actuality, the exilarch may have brought his circles closer to the rabbis but, in the process, used them to bolster his own power.

It is as a teacher that Ashi is especially remembered. He extended rabbinic law to cover more refined issues in diverse areas from the liturgy to civil law and addressed personal ethics such as the importance of humility. As the dictum "Ashi and Rabina' are the end of *hora'ah* ["instruction"]" notes, Ashi marked a turning point in intellectual development. The statement is usually held to mean that Ashi redacted the Talmud, although later editors may have restructured the discussions. In recent scholarship, Ashi is seen as not a redactor but the last named master who employed categorical statements, which later anonymous masters (between 427 and 500) expanded and wove into elabo-

rate arguments and which final savoraic editors revamped and restructured. This new assessment credits Ashi with considerable impact, since it implies that rabbis after Ashi believed they could not teach independently but only rework earlier thinking.

[*See also* Amoraim *and* Talmud.]

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ASHKENAZIC HASIDISM. In the late twelfth century, the Jewish communities of Mainz, Worms, and Speyer saw the emergence of a Jewish pietistic circle characterized by its own leadership and distinctive religious outlook. For almost a hundred years, the Jewish pietists of medieval Germany *(hasidei Ashkenaz)* constituted a small elite of religious thinkers who, along with their followers, developed and sought to carry out novel responses to a variety of social and religious problems.

Pietistic texts were written by three members of the same circle who were also part of the Qalonimos family. Tracing their origins to northern Italy, the Qalonimides claimed to be descendants of the founding family of Mainz Jewry in Carolingian times and bearers of distinctive ancient mystical traditions. The three major figures in this group were Shemu'el, son of Qalonimos the Elder of Speyer, known as "the pietist, the holy, and the prophet" (fl. mid-twelfth century); his younger son, Yehudah, known as "the pietist" (d. 1217); and Yehudah's disciple and cousin, El'azar, son of Yehudah of Worms, who called himself "the insignificant" (d. 1230?).

In their pietistic writings, Shemu'el, Yehudah, and El'azar developed in detail the contours of a distinctive perception of the ideal Jewish way of life, which they thought must be followed for the individual Jew to attain salvation in the afterlife. This shared personal eschatology, or vision of the ideal way for the individual to behave, was attached to the ancient biblical and classical rabbinic term *hasid*, which had denoted, at various times, those who are loyal or faithful to God (e.g.,

Ps. 31:24, 37:28–29) or someone who is punctilious in observing the religious commandments of Judaism and who even foregoes that to which he is entitled (e.g., *Avot* 5.10).

The German-Jewish pietists built their own understanding of *hasid*, or "pietist," upon the cumulative foundation of earlier meanings but moved in new directions as well. Their worldview was grounded in the idea that God's will is only partially revealed in the words of the Pentateuch, or the Torah, given to the prophet Moses at Mount Sinai. God's will requires of the truly faithful and punctilious Jew, that is, of the *hasid*, a search for a hidden and infinitely demanding additional *torah*, which God encoded in the words of scripture. He did this, moreover, to enable the pietist to earn additional reward in the afterlife by searching for it and fulfilling it as best he can.

The difficult task of discovering the hidden will of God is part of a central concept in pietism. The pietists maintained that life consists of a divinely ordained trial by which the pietist's loyalty to God is continually tested in all he does, thinks, and feels. The source of the trial is a man's passions, such as sexual attraction to women other than his own wife or the drive for personal honor and adulation in this world. The pietistic authors refer to these urges as the "evil impulse" *(yetser ha-ra')*, a term from classical rabbinic theology. Sometimes associated with the tempter or the accuser (Satan) in the *Book of Job* (e.g., 1:6–12), the pietist's trial by his passions is part of God's plan to reward the successful pietist who resists them. As Shemu'el says, "Is not the evil impulse good for man? If it did not dominate him, what reward would he earn for acting virtuously?" (*Sefer ha-yir'ah*, or *Book of the Fear of God*, para. 2). God's reward for the pietist derives not only from his struggle to search scripture for God's hidden commandments but also from his continuous resistance of the evil impulse. That effort, in turn, involves a constant self-examination of one's motives and feelings. As such, German Hasidism constitutes one of several contemporary developments in the spiritualization of ancient Judaism which led to new modes of piety. Along with Maimonidean religious philosophy, theosophical mysticism, or Qabbalah, and the scholastic legal achievement of the glossators of the Talmud, German-Jewish pietism permanently reshaped classical Judaism into traditional Judaism, which lasted down to the modern period.

One result of the fact that the pietist's life requires resistance to all kinds of temptations of the flesh and ego was the tendency toward asceticism. Grounded in the authors' focus on maximizing otherworldly reward by resisting temptations in this world, the pietist is told

to avoid all illicit physical or psychological pleasure during his life. For this reason, a pietist should not play with his children or benefit from any social honors. Yehudah the Pietist even goes so far as to prohibit an author from writing his own name in the introduction to a book he has written. His children might take pride in their father's work, and this "enjoyment" in this world will deprive them of some of their reward in the next one.

The centrality in the pietistic ideal of viewing life as a continuous divine trial probably was a reaction, at least in part, to the traumatic memory of acts of suicidal Jewish martyrdom which took place in the same Rhineland towns in the spring of 1096. In the wake of the First Crusade hundreds of Jews, including many of the intellectual elite of Mainz and Worms, were either killed for not converting to Christianity on the spot or else martyred themselves in acts of ritualized socioreligious polemic. Rather than be defiled by the "impurity" of Christians, whom the Jews at that time regarded as idolators, many men and women created a boundary between themselves and their enemy by taking their own lives. In so doing, they acted as though they were Temple sacrifices or holy things which only the holy, or other Jews, could touch. By killing their own families and then themselves, they sought to keep ritual pollution in check. The Hebrew chronicles that describe these events indicate that the crusader mob never reached Jerusalem. By picturing the Jewish martyrs as Temple sacrifices, the chroniclers indicate that the Jews of Mainz in effect erected their own symbolic version of the Temple of Jerusalem and by so doing affirmed their absolute loyalty and faithfulness to God and Judaism through the ultimate sacrifice of having to give their lives.

In the pietistic writings of the Qalonimides, we find echoes of the trauma of 1096. Not only is the life of the pietist a trial, as were the events of that year, but the need to resist the evil impulse is compared to the willingness to be martyred if necessary. In fact, the authors assume that their readers would willingly sacrifice their lives if Christians were to threaten them with the penalty of death for not converting: "If you were living at a time of religious persecution, you would endure tortures or death for the sake of the Holy One, blessed be He. . . . You certainly should endure this [trial] which is not as severe but is only [resisting] your evil impulse which strongly urges you to sin" (Sefer ha-yir'ah, para. 2).

The conception that the pietist's life was a trial that he should resist might have led to the conclusion that temptations were to be sought out and fought off. This possibility was discussed but was considered very risky. The struggle between the pietist who tries to live on the boundary, nearly sinning while resisting temptation, is

illustrated in Yehudah the Pietist's major work about pietism, Sefer ḥasidim (Book of the Pietists). There Yehudah illustrates the pietistic ideal in hundreds of exempla, or moralistic tales, about pietists and the Jewish communities in which they lived among Christians and other Jews who were not pietists. In one of his most celebrated tales, he describes a pietist who comes close to sinning by risking his own life in order to affirm his loyalty to God.

Yehudah tells of a pietist who used to torture himself in the summer by lying down on the ground among fleas and in the winter by placing his feet in a container filled with water until they froze. A friend challenged his extremes of self-punishment by quoting a classic proof-text against suicide (Gn. 9:5). The pietist answered that he was only atoning for his sins.

After the pietist died, one of his students sought to find out if his teacher was being rewarded or punished for undergoing such extreme penances. In a dream, the pietist takes the student to Paradise and tells him that his place is high up and that the student will only attain such a high place if he continues to perform acts of virtue. This vision convinced the student that his master was not being punished for flirting with the prohibition of committing suicide (Sefer ḥasidim, ed. Wistinetzki, para. 1556).

The Socioreligious Program. While all three Qalonimides shared a common vision regarding a personal eschatology, there were major ways in which Yehudah differed with Shemu'el and other ways in which El'azar disagreed with Yehudah. Since we have only one tract by Shemu'el, Sefer ha-yir'ah, it is impossible to know many of his religious ideas, but from a comparison of that work with Yehudah's Sefer ḥasidim, Yehudah emerges as an important innovator in several respects. Above all, he developed a social, as well as a personal, program for the pietist. In the process of defining his socioreligious understanding of the demands of pietism, Yehudah focuses on Jews who were not pietists and criticized communal leaders or rabbis who permitted or condoned social abuses. He accuses them of ignoring justice and of taking advantage of the poor.

In addition to presenting pietism as having a social as well as a personal dimension, Yehudah defines a new social context for the pietists themselves. While Shemu'el's work is addressed to the individual pietist, Yehudah takes for granted that pietists are organized as a fellowship distinct from other Jews who are not pietists. Moreover, he views this sectarian fellowship as a subcommunity of Jews who are led not by nonpietist communal elders but by their own religious leaders, charismatic figures called sages (ḥakhamim). Thus the social world presupposed in Yehudah's Sefer ḥasidim

consists of three groups: pietistic Jews, nonpietistic Jews, and Christians. For Yehudah, unlike Shemu'el, a Jew may be rich or poor, scholarly or ignorant, powerful or common, but the only distinction that matters is between being a pietist and not.

The exclusivistic character of Yehudah's pietists was not absolute: a nonpietist could become a pietist by undergoing an initiation ceremony of atonement. For this purpose, Yehudah's *Sefer hasidim* includes a penitential manual which he designed for the sage who now functions as a confessor and dispenser of penances. This elaborate penitential ritual serves the sectarian functions of disciplining pietists who temporarily lapse and enabling nonpietists to "enter," or be initiated into pietism by means of a penitential rite of passage. A pietist or would-be pietist approaches a sage, confesses his sins to him, and receives from the sage an appropriate penance to perform.

Although the door to pietism was open for others, the pietists generally appeared to other Jews as a self-righteous elite. It is not surprising, then, that they experienced a great deal of antagonism from other Jews. By insisting that only pietists should serve as cantors in the synagogue, or be scribes, or be considered proper spouses for themselves or their children, or be eligible to receive charity, they made themselves extremely unpopular. And so to be a pietist was to be the butt of jokes, the target of ridicule, and the victim of intemperate hostility.

In view of their high regard for themselves, one might have expected the pietists to try to take over the Jewish communities in which they lived. In fact, in Yehudah's writings there are signs of three political strategies by which they sought to implement their programmatic vision of the perfect Jewish society. Two of these strategies failed: they could not take over the leadership of the communities for long, and they failed to maintain at least one attempt to create a utopian commune of pietists living in splendid isolation apart from other Jews. A third approach, however, is characteristic of the pietists who are described in *Sefer hasidim*. Groups tried to live in, but not with, the rest of the Jewish community while struggling to retain their fellowship and resist being absorbed or even influenced by the nonpietistic majority. Not surprisingly, even this compromise form of sectarianism was short-lived, so much so that it left barely any trace outside of Yehudah's own writings.

Although Jews resisted Yehudah's radical program of forming a sectarian fellowship, they were able to remain pietists as individuals thanks to El'azar of Worm's translation of pietism back into a personalist idiom. In marked contrast to the sectarian and political orientation of *Sefer hasidim*, El'azar's writings, like Shemu'el's,

are addressed to the individual pietist or Jew, not to organized subgroups of pietists and their sages. There is not even a hint in El'azar's writings that he thought of sages except as a failure. Thus unlike the penitential in *Sefer hasidim*, which was designed for the use of the sage as confessor, El'azar's private penitentials enable sinners to learn by themselves which penances to undergo simply by reading the manual. He even tells his readers that his manuals were necessary because Jews were too embarrassed to approach another Jew and confess their sins to him.

By articulating a nonsectarian, personalist formulation of pietism in the wake of Yehudah's failed attempt to effect a social as well as personal religious revival, El'azar was a conservative spokesman for a pre-*Sefer hasidim* form of German-Jewish pietism. But El'azar was himself resourceful in adapting and salvaging the shared vision and values of the pietistic ideal. He institutionalized it by incorporating it into his book of German-Jewish customary law, *Sefer ha-roqeah*. In so doing, El'azar "normalized" an innovative expression of Judaism by bringing it into the mainstream of rabbinic legal precedents. Ironically, the penances which Yehudah, a critic of the nonpietistic rabbinic and communal elite, devised for new members of the pietistic fellowship, were later implemented by rabbinic leaders themselves, thanks to El'azar's including them in his book of religious law. El'azar thus transformed and preserved the values and many of the customs first advanced by the pietists and blended them into his compendium of earlier German-Jewish tradition. This enabled pietism to become a critical part of "ordinary" European Jewish piety throughout the succeeding centuries.

Theological and Mystical Works. Thanks to Yehudah's stricture that authors should not mention their own names in the books they write, we have no explicit internal evidence about Yehudah's own writings. Nevertheless, it is reasonably clear from early attributions and quotations that he wrote not only the major collection of pietistic thought, *Sefer hasidim*, but also several books of esoteric lore. Thus Joseph Dan has posited, with good reason, that Yehudah probably is the author of several still unpublished esoteric works found, for example, in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hebrew Manuscript Oppenheim 540 (Neubauer no. 1567). In these writings, many of which El'azar edited under the title *Sodei razayya'* (Esoteric Secrets), Yehudah deals with the problem of anthropomorphism in an original way. Although unaware of most of the medieval Jewish philosophical tradition, which was being translated then from Arabic into Hebrew, Yehudah did have a "paraphrased" version of the tenth-century Jewish philosophical work by Sa'adyah Gaon, *Emunot ve-de'ot*

(The Book of Beliefs and Opinions). There Sa'adyah posits that God is one and that all concrete imagery in the Bible and rabbinic lore which seems to refer to God himself actually refers to a created aspect of God, the divine glory, or *kavod*.

Yehudah the Pietist maintained the distinction between God's oneness and a *kavod*, but he argued that the *kavod* was itself a twofold emanation of God and not a created being. In separate tracts, Yehudah discussed the implications for the practical religious life of this theological distinction. Particularly at stake was the question as to which aspect of God the pietist should concentrate on when he prays. Yehudah insisted that the pietist must think only of the upper, hidden "face" of the glory, not of the lower "face," which is revealed in images to the prophets. To think of the latter would be idolatry. Moreover, Yehudah wrote that the pietists should pray slowly, in a drawn out or deliberate style (*be-meshekh*), in order to permit time to think about elaborately worked out word and number associations attached to the words of the liturgy. Several versions of these mystical prayer commentaries exist, although none has been published. Other parts of El'azar's *Sodei razayya'* deal with manipulations of the Hebrew alphabet and of the divine names to achieve mystical results, including the fabrication of a homunculus or *golem*.

One genre which expressed the Qalonimides' theology about anthropomorphism did find its way not only into print but even into the standard prayerbook. The Songs of Divine Oneness (*shirei yihud*) extol God himself as being beyond any attributes. Complementing these prayers is the equally mystical Song of Divine Glory (*shir ha-kavod*), an intensely evocative expression of the pietist's yearning to see God's glory, based on *Exodus* 33:18ff., *Song of Songs* 5:11ff., and the Babylonian Talmud, *Berakhot* 7a.

Apart from the library of esoteric, theological, and mystical texts which can be ascribed with varying degrees of probability to Shemu'el, Yehudah, and El'azar, other works contain some divergent ideas and themes and have been ascribed to mainly anonymous subgroups. Of these writings, mention should be made of *Sefer ha-hayyim* (The Book of Life) and *Sefer ha-navon* (The Book of the Discerning). Of the few known authors outside the Qalonimide circle and their descendants, the most fascinating is Elhanan, son of Yaqar, who atypically knew Latin and made use of Christian works in his esoteric commentaries and text in the late thirteenth century.

Although some of the esoteric writings associated with German-Jewish thinkers consist of exegetical speculations about God, many others deal with mystical experience and practice and are derived from ancient Jewish mystical traditions. It is significant that the Qalonimides preserved, studied, and elaborated much of the late ancient and early medieval Palestinian and Babylonian mystical texts about the divine chariot (*merkavah*), based on *Ezekiel*, chapters 1 and 10, and on the ascent through the heavenly palaces (*heikhalot*). Their writings about manipulating the divine name in the form of permutations of the Hebrew alphabet to achieve mystical and magical goals, decidedly influenced later Jewish mysticism in Spain. Thus, their mystical and esoteric writings and their expression of ascetic pietism contributed to the Jewish mystical tradition and, more generally, to the distinctive fabric of traditional Jewish piety.

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ASHOKA. *See* Aśoka.

ASHTART. *See* Astarte.

ASHUR was the national god of Assyria; his name is that of the city and state of Assyria (known in Akkadian as Ashur or Assur). He is frequently mentioned in texts from the old Assyrian period (twentieth and nineteenth centuries BCE) and rose to prominence with the growth of the Assyrian state. Ashur was manifestly a political god. He is known primarily from documents of the Assyrian royal court and from monumental inscriptions. He was intimately connected with the monarchy, and was considered to be the god who bestowed scepter and crown. He also participated in the military exploits of Assyria: the kings recorded that they took to the field upon Ashur's command, received arms from him, and

won by his might, and they viewed the nations they conquered (and their gods) as subject to Ashur.

The emphasis on Ashur's political role has obscured the god's nonpolitical aspects. He does not play a great role in the hymns, prayers, and incantations that came from the Sumero-Babylonian tradition and that tended to feature Marduk and the gods representing cosmic forces. Ashur was elevated to chief rank because he was equated with the other Mesopotamian gods who represented power. From An, titular head of the Sumerian pantheon, he acquired the attribute "father of the gods." Ashur became known as the "Assyrian Enlil" in the thirteenth century BCE and received some of Enlil's titles, such as "great mountain" and "lord of the lands." At the height of Assyrian military power, during the reign of the Sargonids in the ninth century BCE, he was equated with Anshar, the father of An. The name *Ashur* began to be written with the cuneiform signs for *Anshar*, and in this way Ashur achieved a supreme primordial position. In the Assyrian recension of *Enuma elish*, the Babylonian state poem about the elevation of Marduk as king of the pantheon, Ashur took the role of Marduk; he thus became, for the Assyrians, the king of the gods.

Ashur's rise among the gods is also witnessed by his family relations. In addition to his wife Sherua, he also claimed as wife Ninlil, originally the wife of Enlil. Similarly, Ninurta (Enlil's son) is sometimes considered the son of Ashur. He is also associated with Assuritu (the name means "the Assyrian"), who may be an aspect of Ishtar. The iconography of Ashur is a matter of some dispute. He may be the archer god in the winged sun disk, though this identification is not certain.

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'ĀSHŪRĀ' is the tenth day of Muharram, the first month of the Muslim calendar. Its general significance as a fast day for Muslims derives from the rites of the Jewish Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement). The Arabic term *'āshūrā'* is based on the Hebrew word *'asor* with the Aramaic determinative ending.

Scholars are not agreed as to the exact day on which 'Āshūrā' was observed in early Islam. Early *hadith* tradition seems to indicate that the day possessed special sanctity in Arab society even before Islam. Thus the Jewish rite, which the Prophet observed in Medina in 622 CE, only helped an already established Arab tradition to acquire religious content and hence greater prestige. The Jewish character was soon obscured, however, through its incorporation into the Muslim calendar and its observance as a Muslim fast day. With the institution of the fast of Ramadān in the second year of the Hijrah, 'Āshūrā' became a voluntary fast.

The Martyrdom of Husayn. For over thirteen centuries the Shī'ī community has observed the day of 'Āshūrā' as a day of mourning. On the tenth of Muharram 61 AH (10 October 680) Husayn ibn 'Alī, the grandson of the Prophet and third imam of the Shī'ī Muslims, fell in battle on the plain of Karbala, a small town on the banks of the Euphrates in Iraq. Mu'āwiyah, the first Ummayad caliph, had died in the spring of the same year and was succeeded by his son Yazīd. This hereditary appointment met with strong opposition in many quarters of the Muslim community, which was already torn by conflict and dissension. Among the dissenting groups was the party *(shī'ah)* of 'Alī.

The events leading to Husayn's death, which were subsequently elaborated and greatly embellished, helped to heighten the drama of suffering and martyrdom. With his family and a small following, Husayn encamped in Karbala on the second day of Muharram. During the week of his fruitless negotiations with 'Umar ibn Sa'd, the Iraqi governor's representative, Husayn and his family were denied access to the Euphrates. The thirst of the women and children and their pathetic entreaties for water provided one of the major themes of suffering and heroism for the drama of Karbala. In the fateful battle between Husayn's small band of less than one hundred and the four-thousand strong army of 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, governor of Iraq, Husayn and nearly all his followers fell. The women and children were carried captive first to 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād in Kufa, and from there to Damascus, where Yazīd received them kindly and at their own request sent them back to Medina.

'Ashura' in Shī'ī Piety. The death of Husayn produced an immediate reaction in the Muslim community, especially in Iraq. It is reported in al-Majlisī's *Bihār al-anwār* (vol. 45, pp. 108–115) that when the people of Kufa saw the head of the martyred imam and the pitiful state of the captives they began to beat their breasts in remorse for their betrayal of the grandson of the Prophet and son and heir of 'Alī. This reaction produced an important movement known as al-Tawwābīn (the

Repenters), which nurtured a spirit of revenge for the blood of Ḥusayn and provided fertile soil for the new 'Āshūrā' cult. 'Alī Zayn al-'Ābidīn, the only surviving son of Ḥusayn, was proclaimed fourth imam by a large segment of the Shī'ī community. His house in Medina and those of subsequent imams became important centers for the growth of the 'Āshūrā' celebration, where commemorative services (majālis al-'azā') were held. At first, these consisted of recounting the tragedy of Karbala and reflecting on its meaning and reciting elegies (marāthī) in memory of the martyred imam. Soon, the shrines of the imams became important places of pilgrimage (ziyārah), where the pious continue to this day to hold their memorial services.

During Ummayad rule (680–750) the 'Āshūrā' cult grew in secret. But under the Abbasids (750–1258), who came to power on the wave of pro-Alid revolts, it was encouraged, and by the beginning of the fourth century AH (tenth century CE) public commemorations were marked by a professional mourner (nā'iḥ), who chanted elegies and led the faithful in the dirge for the martyred imam and his followers.

In 962, under the patronage of the Buyids (an Iranian dynasty with deep Shī'ī sympathies that held power in Iraq and Iran from 932 to 1055), 'Āshūrā' was declared a day of public mourning in Baghdad. Processions filled the streets, markets were closed, and shops were draped in black. Special edifices called ḥusaynīyāt were built to house the 'Āshūrā' celebrations. By the end of the third century AH such buildings were common in Cairo, Aleppo, and many Iranian cities.

The greatest impetus for the development of the 'Āshūrā' celebration as a popular religious and artistic phenomenon came with the rise of the Safavid dynasty in Iran in 1501. The Safavids adopted Shiism as Iran's state religion and worked tirelessly to consolidate and propagate it. It was during their rule that the literary genre known as ta'ziyah (passion play) was highly developed and popularized. [See Ta'ziyah.] From Iran the 'Āshūrā' celebration spread first to the Indian subcontinent and from there to other areas influenced by Iranian language and culture.

Some scholars have postulated a direct relation between the 'Āshūrā' celebration and the ancient rites of Tammuz and Adonis, but the extent of such influence can never be determined. The fact that Ḥusayn died on the very spot where they were observed may simply be a historical coincidence, and it is perhaps more plausible that parallels between these two phenomena are due to human psychology and the need to express strong emotions through a common form of myth and ritual.

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ASKLEPIOS, also known as Asklapios (Gr.) and Aesculapius (Lat.), was the ancient Greek god of healing. The etymology of the name *Asklepios* is uncertain, but it may derive from *ēpiotēs*, meaning "gentleness."

Origin of the Cult. Asklepios's cult seems to have originated at Tricca (modern Trikkala in Thessaly), where he must have been consulted as a *hērōs iatros* ("hero physician"). Though excavated, his site there has yielded no further information about his cult. From Tricca, Asklepios traveled in the form of a baby in swaddling clothes to Titane on the Peloponnese. His fame as a healer grew, and he came to settle at nearby Epidaurus. There he ranked already as a god and was recognized by the state cult (as was also the case later in Kos, Athens, Rome, and Pergamum). Epidaurus maintained the cult and the rites associated with it; the city also founded numerous sanctuaries elsewhere that were dedicated to the god. Two hundred are known to have existed throughout the Greco-Roman world. Migrations of the cult were always effected by transporting one of Asklepios's sacred snakes from the sanctuary in Epidaurus. The snake was the god in his theriomorphic manifestation, for Asklepios was an essentially chthonic deity (one having origins in the earth), as his epithets "snake" and "dog" amply testify. The snake embodies the capacity for renewal of life and rebirth in health, whereas the dog, with its reliable instinct for following a scent, represents a healthy invulnerability to both illusion and sham. Asklepios probably inherited his dog aspect from his father Apollo Kunegetes ("patron of dogs").

Mythology. Asklepios was apparently more successful than other mortal healers such as Amphiaraos or Trophonios. Nevertheless, knowledge about these two figures is invaluable in our reconstruction of the cult of Asklepios. After proving himself a healer of extraordinary success, serving for instance as *genius loci* ("guardian spirit") at the oracle of Tricca and curing the most

hopeless illnesses, Asklepios went so far as to resurrect the dead, a display of pride or hubris that greatly angered Zeus. Zeus then cast a thunderbolt at the physician, but instead of killing him, the shock rendered him immortal by way of apotheosis.

The history of the divine Asklepios is found in both Pindar's *Pythian Ode* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 11, in which the mortal woman Coronis becomes pregnant with Asklepios, fathered by Apollo. She wants to marry one Ischys in order to legitimatize the birth of the child, but Apollo gets jealous and causes her to be burned to death. While the mother dies on a funeral pyre, Apollo rescues his child by means of a Caesarean section, and entrusts the infant to the centaur Chiron. Chiron teaches the child the art of healing, and Asklepios grows into his role as a god-man *(theios anēr)*. Additional knowledge about the healer is derived, for the most part, from tales about the cures he effected, especially through the process called incubation.

Incubation. The cult of Asklepios is hardly documented, whereas literary evidence of his cures is abundant. Extant are more than seventy case histories from the sanctuaries at Epidaurus, Kos, and the Tiber Island at Rome. Edited with care by priests, the texts have been carved on stone slabs, or stelae. Each gives the identity of the patient, the diagnosis of the illness, and the dream experienced during incubation in the holy precincts. The dream was believed to have been the therapeutic experience resulting in the cure.

Upon arriving in the *hieron*, the sacred precinct, the patient was lodged in a guest house and came under the care of the priests. A series of lustrations for purification, followed by sacrifices, were performed by the patient as preparation for the ritual cure. Baths, in particular cold baths, were always required of the patients. Abundant springs existed in the sanctuaries of Asklepios, but because they were cold rather than warm or mineral baths, the Asklepieia never degenerated into mere spas for pleasure.

The preferred sacrificial animal was the cock, as witnessed by Plato *(Phaedo* 118a), who tells how Socrates, having taken his lethal drink, asks his friends to offer a cock to Asklepios for having cured him of the sickness of life. The patient reported his dreams to the priest and, as soon as he had a propitious dream, was taken the following night to the *abaton* (or *aduton*), that is, to the "place forbidden to the 'unbidden' ones." There the patient had to lie on a cot, or *klinē* (from which our word *clinic* derives), in order to await the healing experience, which came either during sleep or while he was yet awake from excitement, in other words, by means of a dream or a vision. During this night the patient nearly always had a decisive dream; called the *en-*

upnion enarges ("effective dream"), it was considered to constitute the cure. Indeed, a patient not healed at this time was deemed incurable. A small offering of thanksgiving was required at this point; should the patient forget, the god would surely send a relapse.

We learn a great deal more about the god Asklepios through the records *(iamata)* of the healing dreams themselves. If the god manifested himself, he appeared as a tall, bearded man with a white cloak (much like the modern physician) and a serpent staff (the emblem of the healer even today), possibly accompanied by a dog. He was often accompanied as well by his wife or daughters: Hygieia ("health," whence our word *hygiene*), Panakeia ("panacea"), Iaso ("healing"), and Epione ("the gentle-handed"). The serpent, the dog, or Asklepios himself by means of his *digitus medicinalis* ("healing finger") would touch the diseased part of the incubant's body and disappear.

Such is the pattern of the typical miraculous cure, but many variations were witnessed. Some of the dreams were prophetic (revealing the location of lost property, or the mending of a broken object, for instance), and showed Asklepios to be the true son of Apollo, the god of prophecy. Additional cases are known, however, where the god refused to effect an immediate cure and instead prescribed a specific therapy: the taking of cold baths, attending the theater, making music (analogous to Socrates' daemon), or writing poetry (as in the case of Aelius Aristides). In yet other cases, he prescribed a certain medicine or applied shock therapy. Rumor had it that Hippocrates learned his art of medicine from the dreams of the patients of the Asklepieion at Kos, the activity of which he tried nevertheless to suppress in favor of his so-called scientific method. After Hippocrates' death, however, the Asklepieion was further enlarged, and theurgic medicine flourished there all the more, with the result that the Hippocratic physicians, claiming a scientific tradition, were unable to eliminate the cult altogether. Thus, a period followed during which physicians and priests coexisted in the treatment of disease to the benefit of the patients.

History. On account of his spectacular successes in healing, Asklepios soon became the most popular deity of the Hellenistic world. His shrines multiplied until no large settlement existed without one. Well over two hundred shrines are known today, and still more are being discovered from time to time. The radius of this explosion was considerable: even today it is possible to find his snakes *(elaphē longissima)* at the German spa Schlangenbad ("snake bath"). With the rise of Christianity, Asklepios, because of his gentleness and willingness to aid suffering people, came into rather serious competition with Christ, so that the Christian bishops,

Theophilus in particular, found themselves compelled to eradicate his temples.

At this point, it may be useful to examine the history of the Asklepieion on the Tiber Island in Rome. In 291 BCE a devastating plague ravaged Latium, and neither medicine nor sacrifice had any effect. The Roman authorities sent a delegation to Epidaurus to ask Asklepios for help. The god accepted their invitation and boarded the Roman boat in the guise of a huge snake. When the boat arrived at Ostia and was being drawn up the river Tiber, the snake jumped onto an island (Isola Tiberina) and insisted on dwelling there. A temple was built and dedicated to Asklepios, and the plague subsided.

This Asklepieion flourished for centuries, and the island was enclosed with slabs of travertine (a light-colored limestone) in the shape of a ship, the stern of which was adorned with a portrait of Asklepios and his serpent staff. Later, an Egyptian obelisk was erected in the middle of the island to represent the ship's mast. The temple has since been turned into a Christian church, San Bartolomeo, which is still adorned by fourteen splendid columns from the Hellenistic temple. In front of the altar is a deep well that contains the water of life so indispensable to Asklepios. Still more striking is the fact that, to this day, the Tiber Island remains a center of healing: the hospital of the Fatebenefratelli, the best of all the clinics in modern Rome, is located right across from the church.

Comparative Religion. Emma J. and Ludwig Edelstein (1945) have tried to reconstruct the cult of Asklepios from carefully collected testimonies; their attempt remains unconvincing, however, because they failed to develop a comparative point of view. It is important to take note of comparable heroes or deities connected with the ritual practice of incubation: Amphiaraos, Trophonios, Sarapis, and Imhotep, to name a few. In every instance the cure is regarded as a mystery, and the rites leading to the cure become models for the ritual components of the mystery cults. The oracles and healing cults were always found in sacred groves, were entered by means of a descent into the earth, and included a sacred well for purificatory baths. An analogy may be noted to the worship of Mithra, which took place *inter nemora et fontes* ("among groves and springs") and whose incubants regarded themselves as prisoners of the deity in a state of sacred detention *(katochē)*. Aristides called the literary works that he owed to Asklepios *hieroi logoi* ("sacred words"), the technical expression reserved for mystery texts. Here also we discover the symbolism of the ritual bridal chamber *(thalamos)* and the sacred marriage *(hieros gamos)* that later became central in both gnosticism and Christian mysticism (especially in the writings of Origen). The paraphernalia

surrounding the cult of incubation guaranteed the people of the ancient world a restoration of health and wealth by restoring the harmony of body and soul *(sōma kai psuchē)*, the disturbance of which was understood to be the source of any illness, a notion present already in Plato's *Symposium* (186d).

The Tiber Island is only one example of the assimilation into Christianity of an important religious phenomenon belonging to one of its closest neighbors. In modern Greece, moreover, and in the Balkans, there are still numerous churches where people go to sleep in order to receive beneficial dreams. Most of these belong to the Panagia Pege ("all-hallowed fountain") taken over from Asklepios's consort, Hygieia. Each one has its own well or is situated close by a river.

Archaeology. Because the Christian bishops were so thorough in destroying the temples of Asklepios, architectural remains are very scanty. However, three things associated with the shrines are worth noting: the theater, the rotunda, and numerous statues. Drama and music were essential elements in the treatments of Asklepios. The theater at Epidaurus is the largest and finest of the ancient world. The rotunda there was the most beautiful and most expensive building of antiquity and was under construction for twenty-one years. Its foundation is a classical labyrinth, and the cupola is covered with Pausias's paintings of Sober Drunkenness *(methē nēphalias)* and Eros, the latter having thrown away his bow and arrows to hold instead the lyre. We can only guess at the function of this building. Several of the statues of Asklepios have been preserved, and the best one (from the Tiber Island) is now in the Museo Nazionale in Naples. Reliefs illustrating memorable dream events from the *abaton* are also on view there. The statues of Asklepios are often accompanied by the dwarfish figure of Telesphoros ("bringer of the goal"), a hooded boy who is associated with mystery cults like the one at Eleusis. From Pausanias we know that Asklepios was eventually assimilated into the Eleusinia.

[*See also* Sleep; Dreams; *and* Healing.]

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ASMĀ' AL-ḤUSNAH, AL-. *See* Attributes of God, *article on* Islamic Concepts.

AŚOKA (Skt.; Pali, Asoka), emperor of India (c. 270–230 BCE), third monarch of the Maurya dynasty, who, after his conversion to Buddhism, was largely responsible for the development and expansion of that religion.

Sources. The main sources for Aśoka's reign are the inscriptions on rocks and pillars by which he made his reforming legislation known to his subjects and exhorted them to follow *dhamma* (morality, righteousness). They fall into two main series: the Rock Edicts, of which there are fourteen, found in various recensions carved on rocks in widely scattered places from the Deccan plateau of central India to the Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan; and the Pillar Edicts, of which there are seven, carved on monolithic pillars in various places throughout the Ganges Valley. A number of shorter and less important inscriptions of Aśoka are also found on rocks and pillars, and are generally referred to as Minor Rock and Pillar Edicts, respectively.

Traditions about Aśoka are also preserved in Buddhist sources. The Theravāda chronicles of Sri Lanka tell of him, since it appears he was mainly responsible for the conversion of the island to Buddhism. There is also a section of Buddhist legends about Aśoka, known as *Aśokāvadāna*, in the *Divyāvadāna*, the lengthy compendium of Buddhist traditions that has been preserved by the Mahāyāna Buddhists. These traditions have a respectable antiquity, but it is certain that, in their present form, they have been worked over by hagiographers. It is difficult to sift reliable historical information from them, especially as the inscriptions, the Theravāda tradition, and the *Aśokāvadāna* have very little in common except that Aśoka was converted to Buddhism and strove to promote that religion.

A few references to Aśoka occur in later Buddhist texts and in Hindu literature, but they throw little further light upon him. Unlike his father and grandfather, he is not mentioned in Greek and Latin sources.

Early Life. Aśoka was the son of Bindusāra (c. 298–270 BCE) and grandson of Candragupta (c. 322–298 BCE), the founder of the Maurya dynasty. According to the Theravāda tradition, Aśoka was appointed by his father as governor of Ujjain in western India, while the *Aśokāvadāna* relates that he was sent to Takṣaśila (modern-day Taxila, near Islamabad, Pakistan), where without

bloodshed he put down a popular revolt against the oppressive officials who had preceded him.

The Theravāda tradition states that Aśoka was not the heir apparent to the throne, and succeeded his father Bindusāra only after fratricidal strife, in the course of which ninety-nine of his brothers lost their lives. His *de facto* accession is said to have occurred four years before his formal consecration as emperor. Considerable controversy exists about the exact date of his accession, but it is certain that it took place within a few years before or after 270 BCE. He is said to have reigned for thirty-six years, which, with the four years of *de facto* rule, makes a total of forty. Eggermont, however, rejects the tradition of the four-year interval. The *Aśokāvadāna* does not mention his usurpation, but both Buddhist sources agree that he began his reign as an oppressive tyrant.

From his capital, Pāṭaliputra (modern-day Patna, Bihar), Aśoka governed a larger empire than any previous ruler of India. It included almost the whole of the subcontinent except the modern Tamil Nadu, Kerala, the southern part of Karnataka, Assam, and Bangladesh. Eastern Afghanistan was also part of his empire. He was, in fact, the most powerful monarch anywhere in the world at that time.

Aśoka's Conversion. It appears from the Thirteenth Rock Edict that when Aśoka had been consecrated eight years, in approximately 258 BCE, he waged a bloody campaign in Kaliṅga (modern Orissa), which seems to have been a part of the Mauryan empire that temporarily reasserted its independence. The emperor was so shocked at the carnage and suffering of the war that he experienced a change of heart and vowed to abandon aggressive war forever. It was after this, it is generally thought, that he became a Buddhist, though he may have come under Buddhist influence earlier. Aśoka's remorse and conversion after this war are attested by his own inscriptions. The account was engraved on rocks in many parts of his empire for all to read, yet neither of the Buddhist traditions makes any mention of the war. According to the Theravāda tradition, Aśoka was converted through the preaching of a novice monk who was only seven years old. The *Aśokāvadāna*, on the other hand, states that he was so impressed by the fortitude and calm of a monk under torture that he gave up his evil ways forthwith and became a Buddhist. These discrepancies show how untrustworthy the traditions are.

For the first eighteen months after his conversion, Aśoka, on his own admission, was not very firm in his faith. Then he began to draw more closely to the Buddhist order of monks. His new policy is first proclaimed in a Minor Rock Edict, which exists in several versions, and which appears to be his first official pro-

nouncement of his new policy. Here, in an ambiguous passage, he declares that the gods who had not earlier mingled with men were now doing so as the result of his reforms, and he calls on small and great to follow his example in order that they may win heaven.

In this inscription, almost certainly the first to be promulgated, Aśoka openly admits his conversion to Buddhism, but does not use the word which in later inscriptions represented the keynote of his new policy— *dhamma*. This word (Skt., *dharma*) has innumerable connotations and is virtually untranslatable. In the Greek edict from Kandahar *dhamma* appears as *eusebeia*, generally translated as "piety." In the inscriptions the term generally seems to convey the sense of "goodness" or "morality" without sectarian overtones. Religious movements such as Buddhism have their own special *dhamma*s, but the *dhamma* proclaimed by Aśoka in his major edicts is a simple code of morality involving respect for and helpfulness toward all other beings, including animals. There is nothing about it that is particularly Buddhist, and Aśoka urged his subjects to respect not only Buddhist monks, but also brahmans and ascetics of all sects. Indeed it has been suggested that the policy of *dhamma* was adopted chiefly for political ends, in order to bring about some degree of unity and solidarity in Aśoka's far-flung and incohesive empire. Such motives may have had some weight with the emperor, but there is no doubt that he personally believed in *dhamma* very strongly, and it was no mere political ploy.

Aśoka's Reforms. The inscriptions reflect a clear attempt on Aśoka's part to reform his administration in the light of his new convictions. He takes pride in the social services he has inaugurated, including free medical aid to his subjects and the development of watering and resting places along the roads to make travel less arduous. The legal system was made more just and less oppressive, although the death penalty was not abolished. Evidently the reforms encountered some resistance on the part of certain government officers, for, in a special edict found only in Orissa, he reproaches them for their lack of enthusiasm in implementing his policy. In the thirteenth year after his consecration, he instituted a new class of high-ranking officials, the "officers of righteousness" *(dhamma-mahāmatta)*, to ensure that the policy of *dhamma* was fully implemented. They were sent out from the capital, Pāṭaliputra, and took orders directly from the emperor, bypassing the provincial governors.

Aśoka evidently was quite concerned about promoting vegetarianism in his empire. He forbade the sacrifice of animals in his capital, a reform that must have affected the livelihood of a considerable number of brahman officiants. He drastically reduced the number of animals killed for food in the royal kitchens, and declared that the daily slaughter of two peacocks and the occasional butchering of a deer were to be given up in the future. In the Fifth Pillar Edict, promulgated when he had been consecrated for twenty-six years, he explicitly bans the killing of certain animals (not, strangely enough, including the cow), and forbids all butchering and hunting whatsoever on certain days of the lunar month. A late minor inscription from Kandahar, bilingual in Greek and Aramaic, states explicitly that the fishermen and huntsmen "of the king" *(basileōs)* had given up their activities. The exact implication of this statement is uncertain; it may refer to a small class of state servants but, since all rivers and wilderness were theoretically the property of the crown, it is possible that some attempts were made to ban fishing and hunting altogether.

Although, in his long Thirteenth Rock Edict, Aśoka states that since the Kaliṅga campaign he has given up wars of conquest, it is clear that he did not wholly abandon his imperialist ambitions, though they were transferred, so to speak, to a higher plane; for he states that he is in fact still gaining victories, but these are victories through *dhamma*. He has won such victories far beyond his own empire, in the lands of the South as far as Taṃbapaṃni (probably Sri Lanka) and even "in the realm of the Greek king Antiochus, and beyond that Antiochus among the four kings Ptolemy, Antigonus, Magas and Alexander." This list (which, incidentally, provides an invaluable synchronism) covers practically the whole Hellenistic world of the time, and probably reflects one or more embassies sent by Aśoka to the five Greek monarchs. Thus he was still an imperialist of a sort, trying through moral suasion to gain influence over the whole world as he knew it. He visualized himself, it seems, as the moral leader of the whole of humanity. "All men," he declares, "are my progeny," and perhaps he intended this statement to be taken almost literally, in view of the ambiguity of the Prakrit word *pajā*, which means both "progeny" and "subjects." Already the most powerful monarch in the contemporary world, he felt himself to be the ruler of a spiritual empire which embraced all humanity. There is no evidence, however, that as a result of his change of heart he greatly reduced or disbanded the mighty Mauryan army, which, under his grandfather, had successfully resisted Seleucus Nicator, the heir to Alexander in Asia. Indeed, in the same Thirteenth Rock Edict Aśoka gives a clear hint of the iron fist in the velvet glove: "The Beloved of the Gods [Devānaṃpiya, a Mauryan royal title] will forgive as far as he can, and he even conciliates the forest tribes of his dominions; but he warns them that

there is power even in the remorse of the Beloved of the Gods, and he tells them to reform, lest they be killed."

No records of Aśoka's embassies of *dhamma* are found in any Greek or Latin source, which suggests that, even if they reached their destinations, they made little impression on the ambitious Hellenistic rulers of the West.

Aśoka and Buddhism. Some efforts have been made to show that Aśoka was antibrahmanical in his new policy. This theory depends on inaccurate translations of certain passages in his inscriptions, and has no sound basis, though his banning of animal sacrifice in Pāṭaliputra and his disparagement of useless ceremonies and rituals in the Ninth Rock Edict may have given the brahmans cause for annoyance. As did most later Indian kings, he gave qualified support to all the religious groups in his kingdom, and he even donated artificial caves in the Barabar Hills, near modern Gaya, to the Ājīvikas, opponents of the Buddhists.

Nevertheless, despite his ecumenical attitude toward other sects, reflected very clearly in his Twelfth Rock Edict, Aśoka was a committed Buddhist and announced himself as such in his earliest surviving public pronouncement. There can be no doubt regarding his efforts to promote Buddhism above all other sects and religious systems. Although the Buddhist tradition depicts Buddhism from its very foundation as an important factor in the religious life of India, it seems likely that until Aśoka gave it his backing it was less influential than certain other heterodox systems (such as Jainism and the doctrines of the Ājīvikas). Aśoka is said to have erected stupas (Buddhist sacred mounds) in great numbers throughout his realm. The Theravāda tradition records a great council of Theravāda monks held in Pāṭaliputra during his reign, after which missionaries were sent out to all parts of the Indian subcontinent, and beyond to Burma and Sri Lanka. Burmese Buddhists still look up to the missionary monks Soṇa and Uttara as the apostles of Burma, but there is no evidence, archaeological or otherwise, of their activities there. Ample archaeological evidence in Sri Lanka, however, indicates that there the mission was soon successful. According to the Theravāda tradition, the leader of the Buddhist mission to Sri Lanka was Mahinda (Skt., Mahendra), said to be one of Aśoka's sons who had become a Buddhist monk.

Aśoka's Last Years. A number of minor inscriptions on pillars, evidently engraved toward the end of Aśoka's reign, show that his interest in the Buddhist order intensified with advancing years. In these inscriptions he instructs his officers to ensure that heretical monks are expelled from the order, indicating that by now Buddhism virtually had become the state church, a situa-

tion not at all evident from the major inscriptions, but confirmed more or less by Buddhist tradition. In a remarkable inscription on a stone slab, found at Bairat, Rajasthan, Aśoka even instructs the Buddhist monks to study certain named passages of scripture.

The *Aśokāvadāna* states that at the end of his reign Aśoka became so generous toward the Buddhist order that his princes and ministers were alarmed at such profligacy, and he was deprived of control of the treasury by a palace coup, which forced him into virtual retirement. This tradition cannot be confirmed, but his increasing enthusiasm for Buddhism is evident from his inscriptions. These, and the *Aśokāvadāna* tradition, suggest that in his later years he began to lose touch with political reality and his grip on affairs was weakening.

The most favored date for Aśoka's death is 232 BCE. The date depends on complicated calculations based on the date of the death of the Buddha, which is also quite uncertain. We may be sure, however, that Aśoka died within a few years of the conventional date. His vast empire broke up, and the process of disintegration may have begun even before his death. The successors of Aśoka have left few records, but there is good reason to believe that they did not share his fervent Buddhist convictions. The Maurya dynasty, in a diminished form, lasted about another fifty years, when it was replaced by the Śuṅga dynasty, whose founder, Puṣyamitra, was an orthodox brahman.

Aśoka's Legacy. Our knowledge of Aśoka is not as thorough as the historian might wish, and much has been written about him that, strictly speaking, is not warranted by the evidence. The inscriptions are composed in a very difficult form of Prakrit, of which many passages are ambiguous and some virtually unintelligible. Moreover, they are intended to project a public image, and they may not show us all sides of Aśoka's character. The legends depict Aśoka as obsequiously humble toward the Buddhist monks, but otherwise the typical despotic ruler, ready to order arbitrary executions and enjoying the delights of his harem. There may be some truth in this picture, which is partially confirmed by the inscriptions. But the figure that appears from the inscriptions differs from the typical despot in that he shows an intense feeling of responsibility for the welfare of his subjects, and indeed for the welfare of all humanity, and a very strong moral purpose.

Somewhat naive in his attitudes, and certainly overoptimistic, Aśoka seems to have believed that his reforms would mark a turning point in history, which in a sense they did. They would last, so he told his subjects, for "as long as the moon and the sun." They were soon forgotten after his death, however, even by the Buddhists, who remembered him chiefly as a great pa-

tron of their faith. By the Hindus he was remembered merely as a name in the list of Mauryan kings.

Yet Aśoka did have an important effect on the history of India. His constant propaganda must have done much to promote the principles of nonviolence (ahiṃsā) and vegetarianism, which are maintained by most Hindu sects down to the present day. But perhaps his most important bequest to humanity was his unqualified support of Buddhism, through which that religion embarked on a career of development and expansion that was to make it one of the most important religions in the world.

[For further discussion of the religious and mythological dimensions of Aśoka's reign, see Cakravartin. Aśoka's role in establishing a formal model of church-state relations in Buddhist Asia is discussed in Saṃgha, article on Saṃgha and Society.]

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ASSASSINS.

The disparaging term assassins, originating in the Arabic ḥashīshīyah (users of hashish, Cannabis sativa), has been used to designate the followers of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī branch of Islam. In its original form, from about the twelfth century onward, the name was used by those hostile to the movement to stigmatize the Ismāʿīlīyah of Syria for their alleged use of the drug. The designation, as well as a growing legend about the group, was subsequently transmitted to Europe by Western chroniclers of the Crusades and travelers such as Marco Polo. The legend portrayed the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīyah as a religious "order of assassins" ruled by the diabolical "Old Man of the Mountain," who incited them to murder through the use of drugs and the creation of an illusory sense of paradise. Reinforced by early Western scholarship, the term and the distorted view of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīyah became general, until disproved by modern research.

Historical Development. The Nizārī branch of the Ismāʿīlīyah had its origin in a succession dispute following the death of the Fatimid Ismāʿīlī imam al-Mustanṣir in 1094. Those who gave their allegiance to Nizār, al-Mustanṣir's eldest son, as the designated successor and imam organized themselves locally in various parts of Iran and Syria by building on and extending the groundwork already laid there during the Fatimid period.

Particularly in Iran, the Nizārīyah faced markedly changed circumstances, owing to the presence of the powerful, militantly Sunnī Turkish dynasty of the Seljuks. In addition to the hostility prevailing in political and military spheres, the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīyah, like their predecessors under the Fatimids, became the object of theological and intellectual attacks, the most significant one being that of the Sunnī theologian al-Ghazālī (d. 1111). This climate of threat accentuated a sense of isolation and prompted direct political and military action by the Nizārīyah against leaders of the Seljuk state, which in turn caused popular Sunnī feeling to harden further against them.

The focal point of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī movement was the fortress of Alamūt in the Elburz Mountains of northern Iran. This fortress, captured by the famous Ismāʿīlī leader Ḥasan-i Ṣabbāḥ in 1090, now became the center

for a number of growing strongholds that were established through military and diplomatic means. In time, these centers became part of a network in Iran as well as in Syria. According to Nizārī tradition, Ḥasan acted as the representative of the imam and organized the various settlements. This process of consolidation provided a basis for what was to become a Nizārī Ismāʿīlī state incorporating both Iranian and Syrian strongholds and ruled from Alamūt by Ismāʿīlī imams descended from Nizār, who assumed actual control after the initial period of establishment. Though under constant threat, the state thrived for over 150 years, when confrontation with the expanding Mongol power led to its downfall, the demolition of its principal strongholds, and a general and widespread massacre of the Ismāʿīlīyah.

The history of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīyah following the destruction of their state and the dispersal of their leaders in Iran and elsewhere is little known. In Syria, as in Iran, they continued to survive persecution. The Nizārī sources speak of an uninterrupted succession of imams in different parts of Iran and, in the fifteenth century, the emergence of new activity that led to a further growth of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīyah in parts of India and Central Asia. In modern times, the community has witnessed a remarkable resurgence under its imams, Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh, Aga Khan III (1877–1957) and the present imam, Shāh Karīm Aga Khan (1957–), both of whom have also played a major role in promoting development activities in Muslim and Third World countries. The Ismāʿīlīyah are currently found in various countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and the West. [See Aga Khan.]

Teachings. While still articulating the Shīʿī Ismāʿīlī vision of Islam developed under the Fatimids, the Nizārīyah laid particular emphasis on the principle of taʿlīm, authoritative teaching, and on the cosmic and metaphysical significance of the imam, whose role it was to impart that teaching. These fundamental notions acquired a more immediate relevance in conditions calling for greater discipline and obedience. Unfortunately, few Ismāʿīlī sources of the period have survived, and it is often difficult on the basis of available materials to gauge the precise significance of doctrinal development.

One religious event highlighted in the sources that came to have particular doctrinal consequence was the qiyāmah. Although it appeared to outsiders as a declaration of reform, it was essentially an affirmation of a religious impetus present in Ismāʿīlī doctrine from the beginning. Providing the culmination of Ismāʿīlī sacred history, the event marked the primacy of the spiritual and inner meaning of religious acts. The outward performance of ritual elaborated in the sharīʿah, or reli-

gious law, was not abrogated as is generally thought; as Henry Corbin, the noted French scholar of esoteric forms of Islam, has pointed out, the Ismāʿīlīyah affirm positive religion in order to inspire believers to exceed it. The symbolic meaning of the qiyāmah was this affirmation of the esoteric basis of Ismāʿīlī thought, the public proclamation of which came to represent a contrast with the sharīʿah-mindedness of those scholars of other schools who had developed a different synthesis of Islam.

The doctrine also projected a spiritual basis for the nature of the imam and for the inner transformation effected in the being of individual followers as they sought to acquire this understanding. Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī (d. 1274), the noted Shīʿī scholar, was one of those attracted by the intellectual milieu of the Ismāʿīlī state and during his stay there became an exponent of Ismāʿīlī doctrine. Within the esoteric perspective, according to his works, the physical bond between imam and follower was to be transcended by the development of a spiritual bond, so that in addition to acceptance of the historical and formal aspect of the imam's role, the believer would also be led to a recognition of the ḥaqīqah, the aspect of Islam that, in the Ismāʿīlī view, complemented the sharīʿah and constituted the highest level of reality in Islam. [See Imamate for further discussion of the Assassins' conception of the imam.]

The goal of religious life offered to the individual Ismāʿīlī by this vision was a continuing quest for inner transformation and a graduation to successively higher levels of spiritual growth and understanding. In the period following the fall of Alamūt, the inward, personal search for religious meaning would lead to increasing interaction between Ismāʿīlī doctrine and some of the principles of Sufism.

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ASSYRIAN RELIGION. *See* Mesopotamian Religions.

ASTARTE was a Canaanite goddess widely attested throughout the Levant in ancient times. Astarte, or Ashtart (Phoen.), is mentioned in god-lists from Ebla (mid-third millennium BCE), in sacrificial and ritual lists from Ugarit (mid-second millennium), in several Phoenician inscriptions (mid-first millennium), and in the Hebrew Bible. In Hellenistic times she was associated with the Greek goddess Aphrodite, and in Syria she blended with the goddess Anat in the composite goddess Atargatis, known to the Romans as Dea Syria. (A few scholars would deny this, suggesting that Atargatis is an avatar of Asherah.) As early as the eighteenth dynasty, Astarte was adopted into the Egyptian pantheon, and it is from Egypt that we have the largest number of iconographic representations of her.

Despite this richness of materials, Astarte remains one of the most elusive of major Near Eastern deities. Modern scholars disagree on almost every attempt to characterize her, and most of her traits are inferred either from her supposed identification with the Mesopotamian goddess Inanna-Ishtar or from her later association with Aphrodite. Her supposed astralization as Venus, for example, is based on such assumptions.

At Ugarit the frequency of Astarte's name in various offering-lists indicates her importance there, but she is mentioned only marginally in the mythic and narrative texts. The meaning of her epithets is disputed, but she does seem to be associated with wandering alongside the animals of the steppes and with hunting. She is not linked with a consort even though she is once called *šm b'l,* "the name [or manifestation] of Baal, " a title also given her in the Sidonian inscription (c. 500 BCE) of Eshmunazar. At Ugarit the context of this title is a curse, suggesting that she is the deliverer of Baal's anger.

The facts that Astarte was a favorite goddess of maritime communities (Sidon, Tyre, Citium in Cyprus, Pyrgi in Etruria) and that Egypt had a narrative titled *Astarte and the Sea* (seemingly based on a Semitic prototype) suggest that her earlier characteristics as a goddess of the steppe were accommodated to later coastal associations. (The Canaanite goddess Athirat underwent a similar transformation.)

It is commonplace in the literature to note that As-

tarte was a goddess of love and fertility, but aside from associations with Ishtar and Aphrodite, this role is not clear from the ancient sources. Rather, her forte may have been animal husbandry. In *Deuteronomy* (7:13, 28:4, 28:18, 28:51) a flock's fruitfulness is called its *'ashterot* ("astartes," a plural or possibly abstract form). Some scholars point to the "Queen of Heaven" in *Jeremiah* (7:16ff., 44:17ff.), worshiped especially by women, perhaps for fecundity, as a possible association of Astarte with human sexuality, but this "queen" is far more likely Ishtar than Astarte. (A better candidate for a hidden Astarte typology might be in *Song of Songs* 4:8.)

The so-called Astarte plaques that occur from the Middle Bronze to the Iron II period (c. 2000 to 800 BCE), found throughout Palestine, feature a goddess with emphasized genitals, holding up her breasts. Admittedly these suggest sexuality, but they probably represent not Astarte but Asherah, and they closely resemble the Qudshu-Asherah depictions from Egypt. [*See* Athirat.]

The name *Astarte,* or *Ashtoret* (a wordplay using the consonants of *ashtart* and the vowels of *boshet,* "shame"), does occur reasonably often in the Old Testament. Solomon, under the influence of his Sidonian wife, granted worship to "Ashtoret the goddess of the Sidonians" (*1 Kgs.* 11). The Philistines apparently had a temple to Astarte (*1 Sm.* 31:10), but, in light of the alternate tradition in *1 Chronicles* 10:9–10, this is not certain. The plural term *'ashterot* ("astartes") is frequently linked with the plural *ba'alim* ("baals," or "lords") in the Old Testament. These terms seem to refer to foreign gods and goddesses in general.

In Egypt, Astarte was depicted as a war goddess and was adopted as a personal military patron of Amenhotep II, Thothmose IV, and the Ramessids. She was associated with training for battle and above all with horses and chariotry. A scene on the chariot of Thothmose IV that shows him going out to battle has the caption "He is mighty in the chariot like Astarte."

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ASTRAL MYTHOLOGY. *See* Sky, *article on* The Heavens as Hierophany.

ASTROLOGY. When astrology, a product of Hellenistic civilization, appeared at the end of the third century BCE, its origins were ascribed to the revelations of the Egyptian god Hermes (Thoth). However, its practitioners were usually called "Chaldeans," a formula devoid of any actual historical reference to Mesopotamia. Hellenistic astrology was actually a combination of Chaldean and Egyptian astral religion and Greek astronomy and methods of computation. [*See* Sky, *article on* The Heavens as Hierophany.] Even though Hellenistic astrology and the astrology of late antiquity took on the features of different local traditions when exported to India, China, or Islamic countries, their basic ingredients are, in all places, Greek science and Chaldean and Egyptian astral lore.

The actual contribution of the latter to Greek astrology is debatable, for the Chaldean and Egyptian traditions were widely divergent on some points. However, the idea of two malefic planets—Mars and Saturn—is genuinely Chaldean; genuinely Egyptian, but no older than the third century BCE (although based on a more ancient doctrine of the *chronokratores*, the "rulers of time") is the invention of the thirty-six decans of the zodiac. The latter was called *zōidiakos* (from *zōidion*, "carved figure") by the fifth-century Greeks, after the shapes of figures that they imagined were in the heavenly constellations. One of the oldest astrological treatises, a Hellenistic compilation dating from the second century BCE, is also said to be Egyptian in origin. It is attributed to the mythical Egyptian pharoah Nechepsos as well as to the priest Petosiris, who may be the same as the Petosiris whose mummy was found in a fourth-century BCE tomb discovered at Eshumēn in Upper Egypt.

Eudoxus of Cnidus (408–355 BCE), the father of Greek astronomy, was also versed in the principles of universal and meteorological astrology. The great astronomer Hipparchus (fl. 146–127 BCE) studied the correspondences of planetary signs with the people and the geographic features of the earth; he was also acquainted with astral melothesy (the study of the correspondences between the human body and planets, signs, and decans) and Hermetic astrology.

Hermetic lay astrology was concerned with the study of universal astrology *(genika)*, world periods and cycles *(apokatastaseis)*, planetary lots *(klēroi)*, and the horoscope of the world traced according to the position of the planets in the signs at the time the earth was formed *(thema mundi)*. It was also concerned with the interpretation of signs as manifested in the omens given by thunder *(brontologia)* and the prognoses given at the New Year *(apotelesmata)*. In addition, Hermetic astrology involved the study of correspondences between astral phenomena and the human body or material objects, as in the study of individual or medical (iatrological) astrology; astrological medicine *(iatromathēmatika)*, based on a complicated astral melothesy; and the study of the correspondences between stars, precious stones, plants, and metals. Most of the texts of Hermetic astrology are no longer extant, but they were frequently quoted by writers of late antiquity and the Renaissance.

The development of astrology was decisively influenced by the great astronomer Ptolemy (Claudius Ptolemaeus, c. 100–178 CE), the author of the *Apotelesmatika* (also known as *Tetrabiblos* or *Quadripartitum*), who made popular the pseudepigraphon *Karpos*, or *Centiloquium*. Other important astrologers of late antiquity were Vettius Valens, author of the *Anthologeuon biblia* (written between 152 and 188 CE), and Firmicus Maternus, who wrote the *Matheseos libri VIII* around 335, before he became a Christian.

After the closing of the philosophical school of Athens in 529 CE, several Greek scholars emigrated to Persia, where they were granted asylum by the emperor Khosrow I (531–579). There they translated several Greek texts, some of which were astrological treatises, into Pahlavi (Middle Persian). These treatises were later translated from Pahlavi into Arabic by Abū Ma'shar (787–886), known also as Albumasar, a scholar in the court of the caliph al-Ma'mūn of Baghdad. Many texts entered the corpus of Arabic works on astrology through Persia: the Arab Masala (c. 770–820), in his compilation of a catalog of books on astrology, listed forty-six titles of Persian provenance. By around 750 CE the Arabs had developed a considerable interest in astrology. Arabic translations of astrological texts greatly influenced the thought of the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

Greek astrology reached India between the first and third centuries CE, introduced possibly by a Buddhist monk. The most important Indian astrologer was the sixth-century philosopher Varāhamihira, the author of astrological treatises and of the *Pañca-siddhāntikā*, a work that contained what was then known of Indian, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman astronomy. However, Indian astrology, despite its subsequent development and later influence, was unoriginal. Chinese astrology may have derived from Indian astrology, but it is based primarily on an impressive indigenous system of correspondences between the microcosm and macrocosm.

The role of astrology in the cultural and political life

of Europe from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries is only partially known. Astrology had a prominent place in Renaissance science, but it gradually lost this position when the church disassociated itself from astrology at the end of the sixteenth century during the Reformation. Only the names of a few of the greatest astrologers of the Renaissance are still known today: Johann Müller (known as Regiomontanus), Guido Bonato of Forli, and Luca Gaurico, bishop of Civitate (Naples), who worked for Catherine de Médicis.

Some astrologers who are almost unknown today were once famous for having prophesied public events. Their predictions were associated with the theory suggesting the universal influence of Great Conjunctions of planets and signs upon religious and political matters. This theory dates to antiquity and was much discussed by the Arab thinkers al-Kindi and Abū Ma'shar. One of the best-known prophesies stated that Luther and the Reformation were the consequences of the conjunction of the superior planets Jupiter and Saturn in Scorpio during November of 1484. Interpreting this conjunction, Johann Lichtenberger predicted that a German reformer would be born who would become a monk and would have another monk as a counselor. The prediction was later rediscovered and associated with Luther (b. 1483) and Philipp Melanchthon.

During the sixteenth century, the theory of conjunctions played an important role in the works of Cyprianus von Leowitz and of the Englishman Richard Harvey. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the theory was used by Johannes Kepler in his astrological calculations concerning a star that had appeared in 1604. On the basis of the appearance of this nova, Kepler claimed to be able to calculate the precise date of the nativity of Jesus Christ, who, because he was a great prophet, was to have been born at the time of a Great Conjunction. His birth was also to have been announced by a nova, the star of the Magi. These calculations fostered the hope that a general reformation of faith would change the deplorable conditions of contemporary humanity. This hope was also expressed by the followers of Johann Valentin Andreae (1586–1654), the author of the Rosicrucian manifestos. The dates of the last two Great Conjunctions figure importantly in the apocryphal history of the founder of the Rosicrucian order.

Astrological predictions were feared by the authorities for their possible deleterious political consequences. Astrology was often condemned or suppressed during antiquity and the Renaissance. [See Occultism.] For example, to counteract the effect of the prophecy concerning the church reformer born under the 1484 conjunction, Innocent VIII issued the bull Summis desiderantes affectibus, which had some effect on the great witch craze of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Eventually astrology was officially condemned by the church at the end of the sixteenth century, as a consequence of other disastrous predictions. However, the liberal trends at the beginning of the seventeenth century were in great measure dependent upon astrological predictions. Astrology seems to continue to exert a certain influence on the political and cultural life of modern Europe, although it is much less influential than it was during the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries.

Confutations of astrology have a common pattern, which usually consists of denying the possibility that the stars could influence human affairs. Some of these confutations are famous, such as those of Girolamo Savonarola, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, and John Calvin. Although Pico's Disputationes adversus astrologiam divinatricem was left unprinted because of his sudden death in 1494, it is very possible that this semiofficial treatise was meant to put forth the antiastrological policies of Innocent VIII and his successor, and to obtain for Pico a full pardon for his past errors and prepare the way for a high ecclesiastical career.

The Methods of Astrology. Greek astrology was based on Greek astronomy, which was abstruse and difficult to practice. This is one of the principal reasons why many of the authors of astrological treatises in antiquity and late antiquity made inadvertent mistakes in astrological formulations that were by their very nature almost impossible to apply. Another reason for the varied and even contradictory astrological systems of late antiquity was the weight of tradition. Traditionally complex numerical systems of astrology were inevitably altered in their transmission and were rarely interpreted in the same way by any two different authors. For example, the numerical systems of specific astrological tables could be interpreted in various ways: the horia (fines, termini), or portions of a sign distributed among the five planets; the tables of hupsōmata, or "exaltations" of the planets in different signs; the tables of tapeinōmata (deiectiones), or "depressions" of the planets; the tables of the so-called partes vacuae or vacantes, the "empty spaces" of the zodiac; and so on. Ptolemy tried to eliminate discrepancies among different traditions by replacing corrupt or unintelligible traditions with numerical series linked by logical, arithmetical operations.

Astrology superimposes two different complex systems: that of the heavens and that of the collective and individual destinies of the human beings on earth. Through the observation of the heavens (and the interpretation of those observations according to a framework of theoretical, nonobservational assumptions), these systems attempt to account for the changes within

the human system, which are otherwise unpredictable, unobservable, and unsystematic. It is true that from a scientific viewpoint there is no real connection between the two systems, and thus Greek astrology has been perceived as an attempt to give mathematical justification to absurd theoretical assumptions. However, instead of emphasizing the arbitrary nature and incorrect theoretical basis of astrology, one might consider its contributions from a psychological point of view. The choice of an analogous system for human fate reflects a deep insight into the transience and singularity of human lives and human events.

Astrological systems are multiple-choice systems based on several informational operators that are capable of accounting for an almost unrestricted number of operations. This astrological "computer program" was used to store information in the memory by several mnemotechnical systems.

The first operator in the zodiac, or wheel, composed of the twelve constellations (more or less arbitrary groups of stars) through which the planets circulate. In addition to these constellations, there are several others that are not in the path of the planets; as extrazodiacal signs *(paranatellonta)* that rise together with the signs of the zodiac, they can also figure in astrological computations and analyses. Beginning from the sign rising at the spring equinox, the twelve constellations are the Ram *(Krios,* Aries), the Bull *(Tauros,* Taurus), the Twins *(Didumoi,* Gemini), the Crab *(Karkinos,* Cancer), the Lion *(Leōn,* Leo), the Virgin *(Parthenos,* Virgo), the Scales *(Zugos,* Libra), the Scorpion *(Skorpios,* Scorpio), the Archer *(Toxotēs,* Sagittarius), the Goat *(Aigokerōs,* Capricorn), the Waterbearer *(Hudrochoos,* Aquarius), and the Fish *(Ichthues,* Pisces). The twelve signs of the zodiac are further grouped into triangles according to their form, sex, quality (cold, warm, wet, or dry), and the element to which they belong. Thus Aries, Leo, and Sagittarius constitute the fire triangle; Taurus, Virgo, and Capricorn, the earth triangle; Gemini, Libra, and Aquarius, the air triangle; and Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces, the water triangle.

Each of the twelve signs occupies 30 degrees of a 360-degree circle. Each sign is further divided into three decans *(dekanoi)* of 10 degrees each; they are sometimes divided into single degrees *(monomoiriai).* To each sign are assigned constant features according to its element, quality, sex, shape, and position. The zodiac revolves on an ideal plane divided into *topoi* ("places" or "houses"). There are two systems of *topoi:* (1) a system of eight houses *(oktōtopos),* which is described only by Marcus Manilius and Firmicus Maternus, and (2) a more general system of twelve houses *(dōdekatopos).* The twelve houses are life *(vita),* wealth *(lucrum),* brothers and sisters *(fratres),* parents *(parentes),* sons *(filii),* health *(valetudo),* marriage *(nuptiae),* death *(mors),* travels *(peregrinationes),* honors *(honores),* friends *(amici),* and enemies *(inimici).* According to a medieval mnemonic couplet, these are

Vita, lucrum, fratres, genitor, nati, valetudo
Uxor, mors, pietas, regnum benefactaque, carcer.

The revolution of the zodiac within the houses makes possible many significant combinations; however, the great variability of the system is due to the movements of the planets. According to the geocentric system, there are seven "planets," arranged according to their distance from the earth and by the length of their respective revolutions: the moon, Mercury, Venus, the sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. These were further classified according to sex and quality. Mars and Saturn were specifically designated as "malefics," a feature inherited from Babylonian astrology.

Ptolemy stated that the planets have two kinds of "aspects": (1) the aspect determined both by their positions in the zodiac and by their positions relative to one another and (2) the aspect determined only by their positions relative to one another. The most important position of the first aspect is the so-called *idioprosōpos,* the position of a planet when it is located at the same circular distance from the sun and moon that its domicile is from the domiciles of the sun and moon. The domiciles *(oikoi)* are the signs ruled by each planet. The sun and moon each rule only one sign, Leo and Cancer, respectively; the other planets each rule two signs. Mercury rules Gemini and Virgo; Venus, Taurus and Libra; Mars, Aries and Scorpio; Jupiter, Sagittarius and Pisces; and Saturn, Capricorn and Aquarius. In addition to the domiciles, each planet has an "exaltation" at a special place in one sign, and a "depression" (or "exile") in another.

Of the second kind of aspect, Ptolemy cites only two positions: the *sunaphē,* "contact," or *kollēsis,* "sticking" (Lat., *contactus, coniunctio, applicatio,* or *glutinatio),* positions that occur when two planets meet on the same meridian. The conjunction is followed by a separation or *aporroia* (Lat., *defluxio).* Several other positions were successively added to these two, but they were not based on the relative positions of planets but on their *aktinobolia (emissio radiorum),* or power to emit rays. When these rays meet under certain conditions they form "figures" *(schēmata),* called *adspectus* in Latin because of the way the planets are "looking" *(adspicio)* at one another. The term *aktinobolia* itself was usually employed to indicate a negative aspect in which a planet could be "blocked" or "sieged" (Gr., *perischesis* or *emperischesis;* Lat., *detentio* or *obsidio,* etc.). While con-

junction with the malefic planets is usually maleficent, there are two aspects that are always benefic (120° and 60°) and two others (opposition, or 180°, and square, or 90°) that are always negative.

Signs, decans, and planets are said to rule both the zones of the earth and the human body. The correspondences between them are classified according to astrological chorography, or the distribution of the sidereal influences of the *oikoumenē*, and melothesy, or the doctrine of the correspondences between stars and the human body. There are three kinds of melothesy, which consider the influence of the signs, decans, or planets respectively. The seven planets are ascribed correspondences with metals, stones, plants, and animals. These are used in astrological medicine, or *iatromathēmatikē*, a complicated science of ascribing drugs or other remedies according to the momentary position and influence of the planets, especially the moon.

Astrological predictions are of two kinds: (1) general or catholic (*katholikos*, "universal") predictions, which are based on portentous events such as eclipses, comets, meteors, Great Conjunctions, the aurora borealis, and so on; and (2) particular, or genethliac, predictions, which are concerned with the position and influence of the stars at one's birth. The astrologer draws a "birth theme" (Lat., *thema*, or *diathema tēs geneseōs*; Lat., *constellatio*) by determining first the *hōroskopos* (Lat., *ascendens*), or "indicator," of the sign or planet rising at the eastern horizon at the precise moment of the client's birth. After the ascendant, three other points are determined on the zodiac: the zenith (Gr., *mesouranēma*; Lat., *medium coelum*), the nadir (Gr., *antimesouranēma* or *hupogeion*; Lat., *imum caelum*), and the western horizon (Gr., *dusis*; Lat., *occasus*).

The meridian line is not perpendicular to the horizon line, and thus the problem of the "ascensions" *(anaphorai)* of each sign is not a simple one; their oblique ascension, according to the real inclination of the zodiac, has to be translated on the equatorial plane, and their angular speed depends on the latitude of the geographic location where the calculations are made. During antiquity, tables were drawn for "seven climates" or latitudes. The astrologer is supposed to calculate with accuracy the ascensions of the signs and planets, and to exhaust, on a birth theme, all possible combinations of the constituents of the system.

[*See also* Divination.]

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Ioan Petru Culianu

ASTRONOMY. *See* Ethnoastronomy.

AŚVINS. *See* Twins.

ATAHUALLPA (c. 1502–1533), thirteenth ruler of the Inca empire and the last to preside over it before its conquest by the Spanish. Present-day Andean people envision Atahuallpa as a messiah. In poetry, drama, and legend, he is associated with both autochthonous and Roman Catholic beliefs. His symbolic identity transcends his historical identity.

Historically, Atahuallpa was neither the noblest nor the last of the Inca rulers. He was the son of Huayna Capac (r. 1493–1527), the eleventh Inca (the title given to heads of the empire). The heir to the throne was not Atahuallpa but his brother Huascar (r. 1527–1532), who at Huayna Capac's request let Atahuallpa rule over the empire's northern half, from Quito to Jauja. Three years later, in 1530, Atahuallpa defeated Huascar in a civil war that left the Inca empire so debilitated that it was easily occupied by Spanish forces under Francisco Pizarro in 1532. Pizarro captured Atahuallpa, who tried in vain to form an alliance with Pizarro to buttress his title. To avoid being burned at the stake, Atahuallpa asked to be baptized, although he had previously refused to accept conversion. He was beheaded on 28 August 1533.

To stifle Quechua (Inca) rebellions in 1535, Pizarro made Atahuallpa's son, Manco II, the Inca ruler. Manco resisted Spanish rule until his death in 1545. Subsequent Inca rulers—Sayri Tupac (r. 1545–1557), Tito Cusi Yupanqui (r. 1557–1569), and Tupac Amarú (r. 1569–1572)—prolonged this resistance for forty years. The Conquest officially ended in 1572 with the execution of Tupac Amarú, although Indian revolts continued. Because of his capitulation, Atahuallpa was ignominious, but as personal memories of him began to fade he became a tragic and redemptive figure who stands at the crossroads of Inca and Spanish culture.

The seventeenth-century Peruvian poet Garcilaso de la Vega reflects the soul of a conquered people in his *Royal Commentaries of the Inca* (1609; Eng. tr., 1961). Garcilaso, himself the son of a Spanish conquistador and an Inca princess who was the niece of Huayna Capac, describes Atahuallpa as a traitor. Garcilaso quotes a citizen of the Inca capital, Cuzco, as saying, "Atahuallpa destroyed our empire and committed every crime against the Incas. Give that man to me and even if he be dead I will eat him raw, without seasoning!"

Garcilaso also depicts Atahuallpa as a symbol of the lack of communication between Indians and Spaniards. At the first meeting between Atahuallpa's retinue and Pizarro's troops in 1532, the Inca was confronted by a priest, Vicente de Valverde, to whom he said, "You claim that Christ is God, but how can he be dead? We worship the Sun and Moon, which are immortal! By what authority do you say that God created the universe?"

"The Bible!" Valverde replied, handing his copy to Atahuallpa. The Inca placed the book to his ear, shook it, and replied, "It is silent?" He threw it to the ground, and at this Valverde ordered the Spanish troops to kill the Indians. Garcilaso's irony is that Valverde represented peace but brought destruction, whereas Atahuallpa represented civil war but sought reconciliation.

During the colonial (1532–1826) and republican (1826–present) periods, Atahuallpa came to symbolize the conquered people, and his death came to signify the disruption of nature caused by the Conquest. This is poignantly illustrated in a poem, *A Eulogy to Atahuallpa*, written in the sixteenth century by an unknown author:

A black rainbow covers Cuzco, tight like a bow. . . .

Hail hits our heads; rivers flow with blood;
The days are black and the nights are white.
Our hearts are overwhelmed because Atahuallpa is dead,
The shadow who protects us from the sun. . . .

Spaniards became rich with your gold.
Yet their hearts rotted with greed, power, and violence.
Atahuallpa, you embraced and gave them all,
But they beheaded you. . . .

Today, may your heart support our sinful ways.
                    (my trans., from Arguedas, 1957)

According to the present-day belief system of the Quechua peoples, the Conquest destroyed harmony between the Inca and his subjects, between Indian and Spaniard, and between heaven and earth. Harmony, it is believed, will be restored by the resurrection of Atahuallpa, which is represented in a popular dance drama, *The Death of Atahuallpa*, performed annually in the Bolivian cities of Kanata and Oruro. In Oruro the drama is performed on the Sunday and Monday of Carnival. The actors playing Atahuallpa and the Inca princesses stand across the central plaza from those playing Pizarro and his soldiers. Atahuallpa debates with his diviner about ominous prophecies and the divinity of the conquistadors. Pizarro captures, tricks, and executes Atahuallpa. As a finale, a choir of Inca princesses chants, "Eternal Lord, make arise the all-powerful and youthful Inca Atahuallpa!" Clowns then bring Atahuallpa back to life. In Kanata a similar drama is performed during a fiesta dedicated to Jesus. Like Christ, Atahuallpa suffers trial and execution and is resurrected. Actors dressed as Inca princesses dedicate the drama to the Blessed Mother and march in procession carrying a statue of Jesus.

Finally, they enact the capture, trial, death, and resurrection of Atahuallpa.

These actors transform Atahuallpa and Jesus into a composite symbolic figure who is acceptable to both the conquerors and the conquered and who promises the regeneration of a harmonious culture in a future age. The archetypal imagery of death and rebirth forms a common denominator between the Atahuallpa of the Inca and the Jesus of the Spanish. However, the drama separates Atahuallpa and Jesus from negative historical associations: Atahuallpa is not remembered as a traitor and tyrant, and Jesus is dissociated from the Catholic colonial heritage.

The rebirth of Atahuallpa is also expressed in the legends surrounding the figure of Inkarri (whose name is a Quechua corruption of the Spanish *Inca rey*, "Inca king") that are found throughout the Andes. According to these legends, the father of Inkarri is the Sun. Inkarri has abundant gold. His head is buried somewhere in Cuzco. His body is slowly being regenerated, growing from the head down. When Inkarri's body is complete, he will return to judge the world. Although the Inkarri legends portend the return of the Inca in general, they are also associated with Atahuallpa. Traditional Andeans believe that Atahuallpa's head is also buried in Cuzco, where his body, too, is being regenerated by the forces of Pachamama ("mother earth"), a major deity in the Andes. When he is regenerated, Atahuallpa will emerge from Lake Titicaca. During the messianic age that follows, he will judge all who have upset nature, culture, and society.

Atahuallpa has thus become a symbol combining Inca attributes of cosmic harmony and Catholic beliefs about the death, resurrection, and second coming of Christ. Both identifications, however, are secondary to the association of Atahuallpa with the earth as the center of a regenerative cycle from birth to death to renewed life. This more basic process provides cosmic meaning for the tyranny initiated by the Conquest.

[*See also* Manco Capac.]

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JOSEPH W. BASTIEN

ĀTESHGĀH. The Zoroastrians probably did not have temples for the worship of fire before the fourth century BCE (Wikander, 1946), when it seems they abandoned the ancient custom of praying only in open and elevated places (as mentioned in Herodotus) in reaction to the temples with statues of the goddess Anāhitā that Artaxerxes II had erected throughout his empire. The fire

temple, or *āteshgāh* ("abode of fire"), was probably cre-
ated as a countermeasure (Boyce, 1975). In it, in place
of an icon, a fire was maintained, fed by wood and
guarded by priests, experts in the offerings and the ap-
propriate rites, who were assigned to its service.

The Avesta ignores the fire temples, except for a
vague reference to them in the *Vendidad*. The *Zād-
spram*, a Pahlavi text of the ninth century CE, gives a
precise description. Earlier references to the foundation
of fire temples are found, however, in the Sasanid in-
scriptions of Shāpūr I and of the grand priest Kerdēr
(third century CE), which speak of "fires of Vah-
rām"*(ādur ī Warahrān)* and of other ritual fires *(ādurān)*.
There existed, then, a hierarchy among the various
types of fires. The great fires, those that were defined as
verethraghan ("victorious"), were known as the fires of
Verethraghna, the *yazata* of victory. The most impor-
tant fires were started by combining the embers of
many ordinary fires. The lesser fires, which came to be
known as the *ātash ādarān* ("fire of fires"), were made
from combined embers from hearths of the four tradi-
tional social classes (priests, soldiers, farmers, and ar-
tisans); the *ātash dādgāh*, the domestic fire, was an-
other type of lesser fire.

In Iran the standard form of *āteshgāh*, from the Sas-
anid period on, was the *chahār tāq* ("four arches"), a
square construction covered by a cupola supported by
four pillars. Many points in the history and evolution of
the architecture of sacred buildings in ancient Iran re-
main obscure.

Today the most ancient fire among the Indian Parsis
is the *ātash bahrām* at Udwada. A fire in this category
must be created from sixteen different fires gathered to-
gether (the fire of a shepherd, that of a soldier, one from
the house of a Zoroastrian, and so on), and purified and
consecrated singly and collectively (Modi, 1937).

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GHERARDO GNOLI
Translated from Italian by Roger DeGaris

ATHANASIUS (c. 298–373), bishop of Alexandria,
theologian, church father, and saint. Athanasius was
born around the year 300, perhaps in 298, according to
a chronicle composed soon after his death and pre-
served in Syriac. Later Coptic legends locate Athana-
sius's birthplace in Upper Egypt, but these claims seem
to contradict his genuinely Greek education. In his
youth he may have visited Christian monks in the des-
ert areas near Alexandria. The Alexandrian bishop Al-
exander (311–328) ordained him as a deacon at the time
of the fateful dispute with Arius, and in the spring of
325 Athanasius accompanied the bishop to the imperial
Council of Nicaea, where Arianism was solemnly con-
demned as a heresy. Elected by a small minority of the
Egyptian clergy and by the Alexandrian laity as the suc-
cessor of Alexander in the summer of 328, the young
Athanasius, not yet in his thirties, faced a critical situ-
ation.

More than half of the many bishops subordinated to
the jurisdiction of the Alexandrian pope had recognized
the authority of the schismatic bishop Meletios of Ly-
copolis in Upper Egypt. Soon after the episcopal elec-
tion of Athanasius, the Meletians built up a common
front against him in supporting Arius and his friends.
They were encouraged to do so by a coalition of bishops
from the eastern provinces of the empire under the
leadership of Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia, who was
hostile to the Alexandrian see for political reasons.
Athanasius was exposed to attacks from all sides in im-
posing without compromise the decrees of Nicaea,
which condemned the Arian heresy and regulated
strictly the readmission of Meletians into the catholic
church. He hoped for a time to consolidate his precar-
ious position by rallying the monastic groups in the des-
erts of Egypt and the Coptic communities along the
Nile Valley. Between 328 and 334 his pastoral visits
reached the border of modern Sudan and the western
parts of Libya. But in 335 the Synod of Tyre, organized
by the anti-Alexandrian and pro-Arian party, succeeded
in driving Athanasius out of office. As it was invested

with imperial power like the Council of Nicaea ten years earlier, this synod made questionable the very legitimacy of Athanasius as a bishop.

Athanasius was exiled by Emperor Constantine on 7 November 335. Only after Constantine's death on 22 May 337 could Athanasius return to Alexandria. But his legitimacy was still rejected by the Eastern bishops, who had gained the favor of Constantius II, Constantine's son and successor in the East. In 333 Athanasius again found himself driven from Alexandria. In dramatic circumstances he fled to Rome, where he was welcomed by Bishop Julius I and rehabilitated by his local synod. In 342 a broader synod, convoked in Serdica (modern-day Sofia) by the emperor of the West, Constantius's brother, Constans I, ratified this recognition of Athanasius as legitimate bishop of Alexandria.

Only in October 346 could the exiled bishop regain his see, but not without Constans's heavy political pressure on his younger brother Constantius in the East. Athanasius's fulfillment of his pastoral duties in Alexandria, from 346 to 356, became increasingly difficult after Constans was murdered by a usurper in 350. As sole ruler of the whole empire, Constantius tried to work out a unified religious policy. However, this policy was unacceptable to Athanasius, because it interfered in the realm of the church's dogma as canonized in Nicaea in 325. In fact, Constantius, influenced by a conservative majority of bishops in the East, rejected the creed of Nicaea. He organized a vast subversive campaign in the West and the East against Athanasius, as the main supporter of Nicaea. Outlawed and sought by the emperor's secret police, Athanasius vanished, remaining in the desert from February 356 until November 361, hidden by the monks but very active in the clandestine administration of his diocese. Exile under Constantius's successor, Julian (361–363), proved less disruptive. Finally, under Emperor Valens (364–378), Athanasius was exiled for only a few months. On 1 February 366, he was fully recognized and was reinstalled in his office, where he remained until his death in early May 373.

Fifteen years and ten months of exile had not damaged Athanasius's popular links with the Alexandrian church, or with Coptic monastic circles. The mature energies of this dominant figure revealed themselves in an even more efficient way during his repeated exiles. At the time of his first exile, Athanasius completed a compilation of older notes and gave them the form of an apologetic treatise. In doing so, he added to a first work, *Against the Heathen*, a second apology, *On the Incarnation of the Word*, with a deeply renewed view of Alexandrian Christology. In the early stage of his second exile, in Rome, Athanasius finished his principal dogmatic work, entitled *Discourse against the Arians*, orig-

inally in one or two books. During his third exile, among the monks, he dictated important historical, dogmatic, and apologetic works, especially his *Letters to Serapion concerning the Divinity of the Holy Spirit*, the apology *On the Synods of Rimini and Seleucia*, and *Life of Anthony*.

Through these works Athanasius entered into dialogue with various pro-Nicene theological parties, among them the group of Basil of Ancyra. Their reconciliation was celebrated at the Synod of Alexandria in the summer of 362.

Athanasius's theology remains strikingly coherent throughout his writings. It focuses on the incarnation of God in Christ as the central principle of Christian theology. The Trinity is truly known only in light of the gospel message. The incarnate Son of God operates in divinizing humankind, which is saved by the Son from death and corruption in conjunction with its own godlikeness. The mystery of Christ, revealed by the New Testament, is actualized in the life of the church, in its official creed, in baptism, in the Eucharist, and in the religious improvement of its members.

The literary and doctrinal legacy of Athanasius was decisive through the Cappadocian fathers in the East and Ambrose of Milan in the West. His doctrine on the salvific incarnation of Christ has shaped subsequent Christian traditions. During his lifetime, Athanasius was acclaimed by Basil of Caesarea, among others—and after his death, universally—as champion of the church's dogmatic freedom against the state's political administration.

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ATHEISM. The term *atheism* is employed in a variety of ways. For the purpose of the present survey atheism is the doctrine that God does not exist, that belief in the

existence of God is a false belief. The word *God* here refers to a divine being regarded as the independent creator of the world, a being superlatively powerful, wise, and good. The focus of the present study is on atheism occurring within a context of thought normally called "religious."

Rudiments in Ancient and Primitive Religion. Already in the writings of Cicero (c. 106–43 BCE), the question was raised whether there might be some "wild and primitive peoples" who possess no idea of gods of any kind. The view of David Hume in his *Natural History of Religion* (1757) was that polytheism, in his view the earliest religion of mankind, was devoid of a belief in God. According to most nineteenth-century anthropological theories, the belief in God was a late development in the evolution of religious ideas. Contemporary ethnographic research supports the view that a belief in a supreme creator is, at least, a pervasive feature of the religion of many primitive peoples, although new attention to the question of a "godless people" has been evoked by the recent discovery of a "stone age" people known as the Tasaday in the highlands of the Philippines.

The complete absence of the idea of God would not qualify as atheism as I have defined it, but the role of the supreme being among primitive peoples is instructive for an understanding of religious forms of atheism as they occur under other cultural conditions. Where primitive religion includes the belief in a supreme being, the creator of all that exists, this being is not always the center of religious life and worship. In the traditional religion of many African peoples the most common acts of worship are directed toward spiritual beings known as the living-dead. These are individuals of the community who have died, but whose influence is still profoundly felt by the living. In some cases God is approached directly only when the living-dead have failed, or in cases of severe distress. Where a belief in the supreme being occurs among primitive peoples, the possibility of atheism is remote, for like other conceptions among such societies the supreme being is not so much a belief, in the sense of a credal affirmation that might be rejected, as an integral component of a total conception of reality through which experience is ordered.

The first step toward religious atheism occurs in the context of religious thought in which a variety of beings, each believed to be supreme, or in which a variety of conceptions of the supreme being, appear concurrently and compete. The earliest documents of the Hindu religious tradition, the Vedas (c. 900 BCE), refer to a variety of gods who preside over various powers of nature and are often practically identified with them. In the *Rgveda* any one of these diverse gods can stand out as supreme when he is the object of praise. In this context no god of the Vedas is more often praised than Indra, the king of the gods. It is interesting, then, that among the hymns that praise him we also find passages that ridicule his reputed power and that cast doubt upon his existence.

Such doubt is hardly representative of the praises sung to Indra. Yet it is significant that this kind of skepticism is included in the most authoritative of Hindu scriptures. It seems to arise concurrently with new ways of conceiving the divine expressed among some of the late hymns of the *Rgveda*. Here, beside the hymns to the nature gods, we find reference to an unknown god who has encompassed all created things. Here we find hymns to Viśvakarma, the father who made us all. And here we find that One wherein abide all existing things, that One which, before all existing things appeared, "breathed windless" by its own inherent power. In these late hymns we also find reference to an impersonal order to the universe, a law *(rta)* to which even the highest gods are subject or which by their power they uphold.

The possibility of conceiving of the ultimate source of the universe not as a god, but as something quite impersonal, is also reflected in the early Upaniṣads (c. 700–600 BCE), the concluding portions of the Vedas. The Upaniṣads are the repository of diverse currents of thought, but the quest that pervades them is for that supreme object of knowledge in which all that has being has its ultimate ground. The Upaniṣads refer to this reality, called *brahman*, in two significantly differing ways. On the one hand, the Upaniṣads speak of *brahman* as having qualities *(saguṇa)*. In this context it is the ultimate cause, the true creator of all that is, the personal God, the Lord (Īśvara) of the Universe, and the supreme object of worship. On the other hand, they speak of *brahman* as beyond qualities *(nirguṇa)*. No concepts are adequate to describe it. The most that one can say about it is by way of negation. With such opposing conceptions, the possibility emerges of a rejection of the existence of God that is nevertheless religious.

The possibility of conceiving of the ultimate as something other than a god, even the highest of gods, can be seen in the writings of other civilizations as well. In the Chinese classics and in inscriptions of the Shang dynasty in China (c. 1750–1100 BCE), we find frequent reference to a supreme ruler in heaven known as Shang-ti. This god is not known as creator, but he was undoubtedly a personal being, a divine supervisor over human society, whose decrees determine the course of events on earth. At about the time the Shang dynasty was sup-

planted by the Chou (c. 1100 BCE) the name *T'ien* appeared alongside of *Shang-ti* as a designation for the supreme ruler in heaven. But the word *t'ien*, meaning both "heaven" and "sky," gradually lost the connotation of a personal being and came to suggest the more universal conception of a cosmic rule that impartially determines the affairs of men on earth by their conformity to a moral order. Closely related to *t'ien*, the ultimate ordering principle of things, was the completely impersonal Tao, literally "way" or "road." By extension it means the way to go, the truth, the normative ethical standard by which to govern human life. In the famous *Tao-te ching*, ascribed to Lao-tzu (sixth century BCE), it is the metaphysical principle that governs the world. It cannot be described in words, but can be dimly perceived within the intricate balance of nature. It is the law or order of nature identified with nature itself. It is not understood as God or as a god.

Classical Forms in Eastern Religious Thought. Skepticism about the existence of a god, even the king of gods, and the emergence of impersonal conceptions of the ultimate ground of the universe is not yet atheism, as defined above. Such conceptions have yet to advance arguments that belief in God is a false belief. Such arguments begin to appear where emerging theistic conceptions of God and impersonal conceptions of the absolute source and rule of the world confront one another as philosophical options over an extended period of time.

Ancient China. In ancient China the personal concept of a supreme ruler in heaven seems gradually to have been replaced by the impersonal idea of *t'ien* often associated with the concept of Tao. For Confucius (551–479 BCE), the most influential of ancient Chinese minds, obedience to the will of heaven is simply the practice of the moral law. By following the rules of duty and protocol handed down from the sage kings of the distant past, one lives in harmony with the moral order that governs the heavens and the life of the earth below. Confucius acknowledged the value of religious ceremonies and endorsed the veneration of ancestors, but he saw the will of Heaven operating by a kind of inherent providence. A person who has sinned against Heaven *(t'ien)* has no god to pray to at all.

Opposing the views of some of the early followers of Confucius, Mo-tzu (c. 468–390 BCE) attributed to Heaven more anthropomorphic properties. He held that Heaven loves the world and desires that all human beings should relate to one another in undifferentiated love and mutual aid. Because he ascribed to Heaven such qualities as love and desire, some have suggested that Mo-tzu's understanding of Heaven approximates the Western conception of God. Yet, as with Confucius, the providential care that Mo-tzu sees in the working of Heaven is administered to man through the natural order of things.

By attributing love to the rule of Heaven, Mo-tzu wished to offer an alternative to the fatalistic views of some of the disciples of Confucius. In this effort he also acknowledged the real activity of the dead and of spirits in the daily lives of human beings and therefore justified on more than ceremonial grounds the religious practices that pertained to them. In contrast to this, Hsün-tzu (298–238 BCE) argued that Heaven is no more than a designation for the natural process through which good is rewarded and evil punished and upon which religious acts can have no effect. Because Hsün-tzu denied the existence of supernatural agents, including the popular gods and the spirits of the dead, he might be called an atheist. But the issue that separates the thought of Hsün-tzu from that of Mo-tzu is an issue very different from the question of the existence of God. What divides them is whether one can ascribe person-like qualities to the ordering law of the universe that both of them presume to exist.

Strictly speaking, there was no precise equivalent in Chinese thought to the concept of God before the idea was introduced to China by the Jesuits in the sixteenth century. In the absence of this conception, the atheism of ancient China can hardly be more than implied. It was in India, where both theistic notions of the source and governance of the universe and impersonal conceptions of the ultimate ground were able to challenge one another, that explicit forms of religious atheism emerged.

God in classical Indian philosophy. The early Upaniṣads form the intellectual background for both the heterodox and the orthodox schools of Indian philosophy that began to develop around the sixth century BCE. These groups of schools are distinguished not on the basis of any specific doctrine but according to whether they affirm *(āstika)* or do not affirm *(nāstika)* the authority of the Vedas. Of the heterodox schools, those that do not affirm the authority of the Vedas, the Cārvāka and the Jains are explicitly atheistic. In Buddhism, the third of the heterodox schools, atheism is implied. Of the six orthodox schools *(darśanas)*, Sāṃkhya, probably the oldest, is atheistic. It is associated closely with the Yoga (meditation) school, which affirms the existence of God. Between the sixth and tenth centuries CE, the Nyāya (logic) school became associated with the Vaiśeṣika (atomist) school, and together they developed forceful arguments to prove the existence of God, while the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā attacked and rejected such arguments.

Its sister school, the Uttara Mīmāṃsā, better known as Vedānta, acknowledged that arguments for the existence of God have persuasive power at the level of everyday truth but held that at the higher level of religious knowledge the supreme being is really an illusion.

It was argued by the Nyāya school that objects made of parts are invariably the effect of a cause. Because the world as a whole is made of parts, the world must be the effect of a causal agent, and this causal agent is God (Īśvara). To this line of argument it could be objected that the world is so different from other effects that we cannot infer a cause to the world as a whole. The Nyāya, however, replied that a valid inference can be drawn from the concomitance of two things without limiting the inference to the peculiarities of the concomitance observed. Otherwise, if I had observed only small amounts of smoke (say from cigarettes), I could infer only the existence of small amounts of fire. On this "principle of concomitance," the conclusion should be that if a smaller effect has a cause, then the largest of effects must also have a cause. This, it is held, is the invisible and bodiless but infinitely wise and benevolent creator. This line of argument was also employed by the Yoga school, which saw the world as having been formed by God from an undifferentiated material cause called *prakṛti*.

A related argument states that since objects characterized by order and design, such as garments, buildings, and devices, are invariably the products of intelligent beings, it follows on the principle of concomitance that the world, which displays the same characteristics, must also be the work of an intelligent being. Further, orthodox Hindu philosophies shared the affirmation of a moral order by which the voluntary actions of persons are rewarded with good or evil in this or a future life. For some exponents of the Nyāya and the Yoga schools, this view implies the existence of God, who as the ultimate arbiter apportions the appropriate reward. In Indian thought we find no specific effort to infer the existence of God from the fact that the idea of God exists in the mind. We do, however, find arguments that try to show, on the assumption that he exists, that he is superlatively powerful and wise. It was noted by some early exponents of the Yoga school that qualities like intelligence and power are found among finite beings in variations of degree. Since the degrees of perfection of any quality represent a continuum of degrees, the qualities of wisdom and power must find their highest degree in an omniscient and omnipotent being.

Heterodox Indian thought. Of the heterodox Indian schools, the Cārvāka represents the most radical departure from the tenor of religious thought in the Upaniṣads. It holds that the Vedas are the work of knaves and

fools, and it rejects all sources of knowledge other than the senses. With this, it rejects the principles of inference upon which the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school depends to demonstrate the existence of God. The Cārvāka holds that the visible world alone exists, that the only heaven is that to be found in the wearing of beautiful clothing, in the company of young women, and in the enjoyment of delicious food. The only sovereign is the king. The only hell to be avoided is the difficulties of the present life. The only liberation is death; and that is to be avoided as long as humanly possible.

We could hardly call the Cārvāka a system of religious life and thought unless we saw a religious motivation behind its prodigious effort to liberate its adherents from the sophistry and abuse of the religious setting in which it arose. The exponents of the Cārvāka reject the doctrine of the soul and with it the ideas of *karman* and rebirth. They reject all forms of religious asceticism and hold that religious rites are incapable of any effect. By contrast, the Jains endorse an intensely ascetic path to the release of the soul *(jīva)* from an otherwise endless cycle of rebirth. According to the Jains, the soul, by nature, is eternal, perfectly blissful, and omniscient. Yet in consequence of accumulated *karman*, conceived as a subtle material substance, all but liberated souls are ensnared in a limiting material body.

The Jains depict the cosmos as uncreated and eternal. They therefore require no doctrine of God in order to explain its existence. Their points against theistic ideas are expressed in differing versions of arguments developed over centuries of dispute. We can mention only a few. (1) If the world is held to be an effect from the mere fact that it is made of parts, then space must also be considered an effect. Yet the Naiyāyikas (the adherents of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theism) insist that space is eternal. (2) It cannot be held that the world is an *ex nihilo* effect because the Naiyāyikas also hold that the world is composed of eternal atoms. (3) If the view that the world is an effect means that the world is subject to change, then God too is an effect since he must undergo change by having created the world. (4) But even if it is granted that the world has the nature of an effect, it does not follow that the cause must be an intelligent one. (5) And even if it is granted that the creator is an intelligent being, it is impossible to see how this agent could create except by means of a body. (6) And if the possibility of a bodiless creator is admitted there remains the problem of his motive. If we say that God created from self-interest or need, we have admitted that he was lacking in some perfection. He could not have created out of compassion, for prior to the creation there were no beings to have compassion upon. If he created out of

inherent goodness then the world should be perfectly good. If he created out of whim, then the world would have no purpose, and this the Naiyāyikas deny. If he created simply out of his nature, it would be as reasonable to say that the world is the effect of nature itself.

To the argument from design, the Jains reply (7) that if a beehive, or an anthill, is the work of a multitude of beings, there is no apparent reason why the world should not have been the work of a committee of gods. To arguments from moral order, the Jains raise the question whether God is arbitrary in the rewards he gives. (8) If God makes a gift of happiness to those he simply chooses, he is guilty of favoritism. (9) If he rewards precisely in accord with the merit of each individual, then he himself is subject to a moral law beyond him.

In its earliest period, Buddhist thought is less polemical than that of the Jains in its attitude toward belief in God. Yet here as well theistic ideas are found wanting. By nature Buddhism is a path of intense self-reliance, explicitly rejecting the religious system of the Vedas that seeks the favor of the gods. In the Pali canon, the earliest of Buddhist scriptures, the Buddha ridicules the claim of the brahmans to possession of a way to union with a perfect being who has never been seen and who is beyond our knowledge. This, he says, is like the man who claims to love the most beautiful woman in this or another country and desires to make her his own but knows not her name, her caste, where she lives, or what she looks like.

Unlike the Jains, who accept the reality of the material world, the Buddhists hold that all that can be said to have being is but part of a succession of impermanent phenomena, call dharmas. To this way of thinking, the idea of a changeless God is clearly out of place. Later Buddhist writers like Vasubandhu and Yaśomitra (fourth to fifth century CE) argue that if God is the sole cause of all that exists, then, given the cause, all existing things should have been created at once. On the hypothesis that the world is a flux of phenomena, it could never have been the effect of a single, ultimate cause. Buddhism, moreover, holds that the succession of dharmas is governed by an immutable law expressed in the doctrine of dependent origination (pratītya-samutpāda). The arising of one phenomenon is dependent upon the occurrence of others. Since this law is held to apply without exception, it admits of no room for an uncaused cause.

Among the Buddhist criticisms of theistic belief, we also find questions about the motive of God's creative act. If he created out of his own good pleasure, then he must take delight in the suffering of his creatures. But it also holds that if God is the ultimate cause of all that occurs, then every performance of every person is ultimately a performance of God. If this is true, it removes from the individual person all responsibility for his actions and finally removes all meaning from the ideas of right and wrong.

Orthodox Hindu philosophy. Acceptance of the authority of the Vedas does not imply theistic belief. While the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school regards the Vedas as having been created by God, the Sāṃkhya and the Mīmāṃsā schools hold that the Vedas are such that they require no creator. For the Sāṃkhya school the universe consists of two distinct realities: soul (puruṣa) and matter (prakṛti). Neither of them can be identified with God, and neither requires God as cause, governor, or designer. The soul is pure consciousness, devoid of qualities of any kind. But in its ambiguous association with the body it is unconscious of its freedom and independence and falsely identifies itself with one or another aspect of material reality. Prakṛti is the primordial ground from which the universe has evolved. It is composed of three fundamental qualities or kinds of substance (guṇas), like a rope composed of three differing strands. Before the emergence of the universe the chaotic distribution of the three qualities had produced a state of static equilibrium. Subsequently, upon a cosmic disturbance, an unequal aggregation of these qualities proceeded gradually to bring forth all the material realities in the universe.

According to the Yoga school, this disturbance in the primordial equilibrium of prakṛti was an effect of the will of God. The Sāṃkhya hold it was not. Rather, prakṛti, in the Sāṃkhya view, evolves by its own inherent teleology, providing the puruṣa the conditions necessary for its liberation (mukti). To the view of the Yoga school that this sort of teleology points to the existence of a God, the Sāṃkhya school replies that prakṛti is capable in itself of this kind of purpose just as milk, though it is devoid of intelligence, is capable of providing nourishment for the calf. A minority within the Sāṃkhya school hold that the existence of God is simply incapable of proof. The majority hold that belief in God is a mistaken belief. If he is perfect he cannot have created out of selfishness, and he could not have created out of kindness, for his creatures are most unhappy.

The Mīmāṃsā school holds the Vedas to be authoritative, but not as created or revealed by God. The Vedas, rather, are the expression in words—sacred words—of the eternal, ritual, and moral order of the world. The Mīmāṃsā supports the performance of sacrifice to a variety of gods. Yet it holds that it is not the gods as such but the potential (apūrva) energy generated in the performance of the ritual that delivers the heavenly reward, and it explains the creation stories in

the Vedas as merely underlining the importance of the ritual action to which these stories pertain.

The Mīmāṃsā shares with the Jains the view that the world is eternal, rendering superfluous the idea of God as the ultimate cause. In the work of the founder of the Mīmāṃsā school, Jaimini (second century CE), we find no specific reference to the doctrine of God. Later exponents, like Kumārila and Prabhākara (eighth century CE), advance definite arguments to refute theistic views. It is held by Kumārila that in order to establish that God created the world it would be necessary to provide authoritative testimony. But in the nature of the case no witnesses are available. The view that God revealed the truth of his creative act is without avail, because it would still be necessary to establish the veracity of his claim. Kumārila also objects to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika view that God created the world out of atoms but has established the varieties of happiness and unhappiness of finite beings in the world in accordance with their merit. If the distribution of happiness and unhappiness can be explained on the basis of the merit of individual souls, then it is unnecessary to attribute this to God. Other arguments of the Mīmāṃsā school are that if God is a substance he is incapable of being affected by the qualities of merit or demerit of individual souls. If he is a spiritual being it is impossible that he could have acted as cause upon the material atoms that compose the world. If God is the explanation for the existence of the world it is impossible to see how he could also be, as he is in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika view, the destroyer. To these objections the Mīmāṃsā add others familiar among other atheistic schools. It is impossible to think of God as having a body, since this body would require a creator as well, yet it is impossible to see him as creating anything without one. And to these are added again the question of the motivation of God.

Like the Mīmāṃsā, Śaṅkara (788–820 CE), the founder of the Advaita (or nondualist) school of Vedānta, regards the Vedas as eternal and uncreated. Yet Śaṅkara's interest is not in the ritual injunctions that the Vedas prescribe but in the meaning of those sections of the Upaniṣads that refer to that pure Self that pervades all existing things, the knowledge of which is the ultimate truth. Śaṅkara, like the Sāṃkhya school and the Jains, affirms the existence of the soul. But unlike them he holds that souls are not a plurality of beings but One. What seems to be a variety of souls is but the illusory manifestation of this One, like a candle flame seen through a broken lens. He also holds that the variety perceived among objects of experience is also like an illusion. In the final analysis there is no material world and no God. There is but one ultimate reality called *brahman*.

The study of those sections of the Vedas (the *Jñāna-kāṇḍa*) that pertain to this truth should be restricted, according to Śaṅkara, to persons who are beyond the desire for earthly or even for heavenly rewards. Those sections of the Vedas (the *Karmakāṇḍa*) that pertain to ritual action he recommends to persons less advanced. In the light of this distinction Śaṅkara admits of two differing levels of truth. To say that the world of empirical experience is illusory is not to say that it is completely false. Rather, it begins and moves within the error that identifies the self with the body, the senses, or the objects of sense. It proceeds under the assumption that the knower is an object within the material world. From the standpoint of the absolute truth this kind of knowledge is seen as illusion, on the analogy of illusions encountered in the mundane world. In the world of empirical experience, reality is understood in terms of time, space, and cause. As such it presents a cohesive picture manifesting a measure of order and design. In the light of this, Śaṅkara argues that on the level of mundane experience the world is appropriately seen as an effect, and that from this effect it is reasonable to infer a cause. He also holds that the evident design and adaptation of the world, as seen from this perspective, is sufficient to infer an intelligent being who has fashioned it like a potter makes a pot from clay. And, in accordance with the view of God as lord of the moral order, Śaṅkara argues that the law of *karman* in itself is insufficient for the just administration of rewards of good and evil.

While Śaṅkara offers these arguments as serious considerations, he acknowledges that the existence of God is not amenable to proof and turns finally to the authority of the Vedas. Any proof for the existence of God is bound to be formulated within the context of a false duality in which the ultimate is seen as acting as cause upon the objects of name and form. The difficulties in proving the existence of God, then, are presumably resolved in the higher knowledge in which appearances like God and world finally give way to the perfect truth.

Atheism and Religious Thought in Western Philosophy. Religious forms of atheism in India appeared in a context in which differing conceptions of deity and of the ultimate source and order of the universe were each capable of supporting an integrated system of religious thought and action. Early periods of Western thought manifested similarly differing conceptions of deity and of the ultimate ground of all that exists. But just as Chinese intellectual history came to be dominated by the impersonal conception of the natural order of the world, so the personal conception of deity gradually achieved ascendency in the West. While alternative conceptions of deity continued as minor currents of West-

ern thought, the possibility of an atheistic form of religious thought received new attention with the criticism of the philosophical doctrine of God by secular thought.

Ancient Greece. The religion of ancient Greece depicted in the poetry of Homer (eighth century BCE) revolved around a pantheon of gods presided over by the sky god Zeus, who was seen not as a creator but as the upholder of moral order. The gods, here associated with various aspects of the universe, are represented as superhuman immortal beings endowed with human passions, frequently behaving in undignified and amoral ways. Nevertheless, the worship of these gods in temples and other holy places, especially by means of sacrifice, constituted the state religion of Greece throughout the Classical period. While there was no precise conception of God in ancient Greece, philosophical criticisms of the gods of popular belief are of interest because of their similarity to arguments later brought against theism and because of the alternative conceptions of the divine they often put in their place. The denial of these gods was a gradual development, finally expressed in uncompromising terms only around 300 BCE.

Xenophanes (c. 570–475 BCE) attacked the anthropomorphic and amoral representations of the gods in the poetry of Homer. He suggested that if animals could draw and paint, they too would represent gods in their image. As the counterpart of his rejection of the gods of the poets, he held a philosophical idea of a higher divine being who must be one, eternal, and unchangeable. There is evidence both for and against the view that he identified this being with the universe as a whole.

The development of Ionic naturalism (c. fifth century BCE) presented a challenge to traditional belief, because it offered natural explanations for phenomena that had been accounted for on the basis of belief in the gods. Naturalistic theories, however, often accommodated belief in the gods or in some conception of the divine. According to Democritus (c. 460–370 BCE), the world and all that occurs within it is but the modification in shape and arrangement of the eternal atoms of which all things are composed. Within this view such events as thunder and lightning popularly ascribed to Zeus are explained in natural terms. At the same time Democritus held that fire is the divine soul-substance that accounts for the life of the body and constitutes the soul of the world. Anaxagoras (c. 499–427 BCE), on the other hand, was accused of impiety and was required to leave Athens, not for an explicit denial of the popular gods, but for his teaching that the heavenly bodies are purely natural objects, that the sun is a red-hot stone and the moon made of earth. [See Naturalism.]

Among the Sophists (c. third to fourth century BCE) criticism of the gods was based on the distinction drawn between law, or human convention (*nomos*), and nature (*phusis*). Ideas associated with public worship were assigned to the former category. They were seen as relative to human society and in some cases as the product of the purely human imagination. With the advent of Sophistic thought, criticism of the gods became more visible, because it occurred not simply in the context of a naturalistic theory that left public worship undisturbed but also in the context of higher education. On the other hand, because their fortunes depended largely upon public acceptance, the Sophists did not always extend their criticism of human convention to an outright denial of the gods. Protagoras (c. 485–420 BCE), the best known of the Sophists, was tried and outlawed in Athens for asserting that he could say of the gods "neither that they exist nor that they do not exist." He, however, is, as far as we know, the first to raise the question of the existence of the gods as a question for which an uncompromising negative answer might be given.

Proceeding further along Sophistic lines, Prodicus of Ceos, a younger contemporary of Protagoras, sought to explain the existence of the popular belief in gods. Observing that Homer occasionally used the name of Hephaistos instead of "fire," he inferred that the gods had originally been associated with things that man requires for his existence. In explaining the origin of popular belief, he did not, however, explicitly repudiate the existence of the gods or the divinity of the sun or moon. The earliest expression of thoroughly atheistic belief in ancient Greece appears in a fragment of satirical drama by Critias, a contemporary and acquaintance of Socrates. In this work the character Sisyphus articulates the view that at its origin humanity was devoid of social organization. Subsequently, men made laws to prevent mere power from prevailing over right. The enforcement of law thus prevented observable evil. Then a wise man conceived of making the people believe that there are gods to police their secret deeds and thoughts. We do not, however, know whether the speech of the dramatic character Sisyphus expresses the view of Critias himself. Thinking along a similar line, Euhemerus (c. 300 BCE) argued that the gods had once been kings and rulers who had become the objects of worship because of the improvements in civilization they had bestowed upon their subjects. Yet he too seems to have held that the heavenly bodies are real and eternal gods.

While many philosophers of this period rejected certain of the gods of popular belief, they also often affirmed the divinity of the celestial bodies and developed alternative ideas of the divine, sometimes in pantheistic or vaguely monotheistic terms. Theodorus of Cyrene (c.

300 BCE), on the other hand, seems to have rejected all such ideas. Diogenes Laertius and Cicero both observe that he did not accept the existence of any god.

Early Christianity. Contemporary research on Christian origins suggests that early Christianity did not unanimously appropriate the view of God set forth in the Hebrew scriptures. A pervading theme of the gnostic literature that circulated widely in early Christian communities is that the world is an untoward environment. It is not the work of an omnipotent and benevolent being but the result of a divine fault. Its creator is unworthy of the religious devotion of man and an obstacle to the religious goal of liberation from the present evil world. The ultimate reality, on the other hand, is not to be thought of as a God at all. It is referred to as the unknown One, the unfathomable, the incomprehensible. Occasionally, this reality is spoken of paradoxically as the One that exists in nonbeing existence. Although by the fourth century, gnosticism was condemned as unorthodox by a majority of Christian churches, it is undeniable that it represented for its adherents a religious way of life.

The emergence of the Western conception of God. Despite the pervasiveness of gnostic ideas in the first centuries of the Christian era, the biblical image of God as father and creator received the stamp of orthodox Christian teaching. The idea that God as creator of the world can be known by means of reason is expressed in the New Testament (*Rom.* 1:18–23, *Acts* 17:23) and becomes a persistent theme in Christian theology from the time of the apologists of the second and third centuries. The speculative theologians of Alexandria (Athanasius, Didymus, Cyril) all hold that although God in himself is beyond comprehension, he can be known through the creation and through the human soul, which was created in his image. In the works of Augustine of Hippo (384–430 CE) we find support for the belief in the existence of God from a variety of facts of experience. With the emergence of Scholasticism, such ideas were developed into rational proofs for the existence of God that were intended to stand to reason without appeal to revelation. According to Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109), God is that than which nothing more perfect can be thought. From the fact that an existent being is more perfect than a purely imaginary object, it follows that God must exist.

Thomas Aquinas (1228–1274) rejected Anselm's proof but under the influence of Aristotle's metaphysics elaborated the famous five ways by which the existence of God can be known. According to Thomas, (1) the facts that there is motion in the universe and that everything in motion derives its motion from something else show

that there must be an unmoved mover. Secondary movers move only when they are moved by something else. (2) From the fact that all events have an efficient cause, Thomas infers that there must be a substantial agent that is its own cause. If the chain of efficient causes goes on forever, there would be no first efficient cause and therefore no effect. (3) From the fact of contingent and corruptible things about us, Thomas proceeds to the fact that there must be a being that exists by its own very nature, a necessary being. (4) Because the highest degree of any quality observed in any finite thing is always the cause of that quality in anything in which that quality is found, the gradations in goodness, beauty, and truth in objects of experience imply that all being and goodness in the universe must have their source in one who is the perfect being. (5) Finally, from the orderly character of natural events there must be a general order to the universe, and this universal order points to the existence of an intelligent agent who has ordered all things. Following Thomas, other arguments were offered in support of belief in such a God. Among the most influential of these were the arguments of René Descartes (1591–1650), who attempted to demonstrate the existence of God from the presence of the idea of God in the mind.

The attack upon theism. Since the seventeenth century this conception of God and the arguments that claimed to demonstrate his existence have been subject to persistent attack. In the first place, because Thomas took the physics of Aristotle as the basis for his understanding of cause and motion, his arguments were less capable of supporting theistic belief once Aristotle's views on these matters were supplanted by those of Isaac Newton (1642–1727). For Aristotle, an explanation is required both for the initiation and for the continuance of change. The first mover of Thomas, since it is taken as both initiating and continuing change, supports the view of God both as creator and governor of the universe. Newton's first law of motion, on the other hand, holds that a body will remain at rest or in continuous motion in the same direction unless it is subject to a contravening force. When the idea was developed by Pierre-Simon de Laplace (1749–1827) that the world is a regular and perfectly determinate system, the idea of God as the source of its movement was rendered superfluous. Moreover, once the idea of the universe as a perfect system was established, eternal existence could be attributed to the material world, as in the work of Paul-Henri d'Holbach (1723–1789). Theistic arguments were further eroded by the view articulated by David Hume (1711–1776) that cause itself is but an immanent habit of thought and not a necessary relation between sub-

stances or events. With this the possibility of inferring the existence of God from any classical form of a causal argument was undermined.

Influenced by Hume and others, Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), in his famous *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), gathered the substance of various arguments for the existence of God into three. (1) The ontological argument proceeds from the idea of God to the existence of God. It holds that this idea is such that the nonexistence of God would not be possible. (2) The cosmological argument proceeds from the fact of the existence of the world to the existence of God as the sufficient reason or the ultimate cause of its being. (3) The physico-theological argument proceeds from the evident order, adaptation, or purposefulness of the world to the existence of an intelligent being who made it.

None of these arguments, in the view of Kant, is adequate to prove the existence of God. The ontological argument treats existence as though it could be the property of an idea. The cosmological argument posits the first cause only to avoid an infinite chain of causal relations. And it presupposes the validity of the ontological argument in its use of the category of a necessary being as the first cause. The physico-theological argument presupposes the validity of the first two, but even if accepted could prove only the existence of a designer or architect of the universe and not a creator.

Such speculative reasoning fails, according to Kant, because it depends upon the illegitimate use of the concepts of the pure theoretical reason that we employ in our apprehension of spatial and temporal objects to extend our knowledge beyond the reach of sensuous experience. Kant denies, however, that this analysis should lead us to the conclusion that God does not exist. In his *Critique of Practical Reason* (1778), he argues that it is in the domain of moral action that religious ideas have their real significance, and it is here that belief in God can be justified on rational grounds. The substance of his argument is that it is necessary to postulate freedom, immortality, and God in order to live reasonably according to the "moral law within."

It was precisely the transposition of religious ideas from the realm of metaphysics to the realm of practical reason, the idea of belief in God as the support for moral action, that attracted the most violent assault upon theistic ideas in the following generation. Its significance for the nineteenth century is indicated in the view of Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872), who argues (1) that religion is the "dream of man," in which he projects his own infinite nature as a being beyond himself and then perceives himself as the object of this projected being; (2) that such a being, as "a contradiction

to reason and morality," is quite inadequate to support a genuine human community; and (3) that a new philosophy based upon the being of man must unmask the essential nature of religion, which is to alienate man from himself, and replace theology with the humanistic underpinning for an ethically legitimate order.

Karl Marx (1818–1883) concurred in the judgment that religion is a symptom of alienation. But he argued that a merely intellectual liberation from religion would be unable to bring about the kind of human community that Feuerbach had envisioned. Religion, he argued, is an instrument of economic control. By its construction of an illusory happiness religion presents an obstacle to the liberation of the alienated worker from economic exploitation in the real, that is the material, world. Later in the century Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) articulated a view of the moral significance of theistic faith very different from that of Marx. Yet it is no less hostile to theistic belief. The God of the Judeo-Christian tradition, he held, is the support of a slave morality. God was the instrument of the weak in inflicting a bad conscience upon the powerful and healthy and thus undermining their vitality and love of life. The success of this strategy has brought Western civilization to the brink of a nihilism that signals both the imminent death of God and the dawning of a new day in which Christian morality will be left behind.

In the twentieth century a new challenge to theism has arisen from the effort of philosophers to develop a criterion to distinguish between meaningful and meaningless language. In order to make sense, it was held, a statement has to be capable of empirical verification. Because statements about God cannot be shown to be true or false by methods of empirical testing, they seem to be without claim to cognitive standing. With this and further developments, the challenge to religious thought was no longer to the justification of theistic belief but to the status of the expression of theistic belief as meaningful language. The threat was not to its intellectual support but to its claim to belong to the domain of serious philosophical dispute.

The twentieth century. To the attack upon theism since the seventeenth century, theologians have responded in a variety of ways. Those of the present century can be discussed as two opposing types: (1) those who continue to affirm the existence of God as the superlatively wise, powerful, and benevolent creator of the world and (2) those who do not affirm the existence of such a God or who even openly deny it. It is within this latter group that the most recent forms of religious atheism are found. The first type includes the revival of scholasticism in Roman Catholic and Anglican theolog-

ical circles, which was accorded official ecclesiastical support during the First Vatican Council (1870). Among the most influential of these theists were Reginald Marie Garrigou-Lagrange (1877–1964), Jacques Maritain (1882–1973), and Étienne Gilson (1884–1978). Central to this response was a reaffirmation of metaphysics and of the importance of natural theology, at least in the sense of a rational structuring of the truths received through revelation and a clarification of these truths in terms of ordinary experience.

A second movement that belongs to this type, neoorthodoxy, dominated Protestant thought during the first half of the century, especially after World War I. Rejecting the prevalent themes of nineteenth-century Protestant thought, neoorthodoxy rediscovered the personal God of the Bible and the Protestant reformers. It repudiated efforts to find God through human effort, and instead affirmed that he is to be known through his revelation attested in sacred scripture and by means of the obedience of faith. The God of Karl Barth (1886–1968), the most influential exponent of this movement, is a God who exists, who lives, and who has made himself known through mighty acts in history of which the Bible is witness.

Around the turn of the present century, the significance of change or process in the works of William James (1842–1910), Henri Bergson (1859–1941), Samuel Alexander (1859–1938), and others, together with a widespread criticism of the absolute determinism of Laplace, provided the context for new efforts toward a doctrine of God in the thought of such figures as Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947), Henry Nelson Wieman (1884–1975), and Charles Hartshorne (b. 1897). Claiming independence from what it saw as the static theism of both the Thomistic and neoorthodox traditions, it conceived God as a limited being who is subject to "becoming" in time as natural "process" unfolds. God, in this view, fulfills his own being, as the force for progress, in and through the ordering of the world.

A reply to the attack upon theism very different from all of these was developed in the thought of Paul Tillich (1886–1965). It centers upon his view of faith as a state of "being concerned ultimately." This view of faith, according to Tillich, transcends the three fundamental kinds of theism that have been the object of secular attack. (1) "Empty theism" is the affirmation of God employed by politicians and dictators to produce the impression that they are moral and worthy of trust. Its use of the idea of God exploits the traditional and psychological connotations of the word without any specification of what is meant. (2) Theism as "divine-human encounter" found in the Bible and among the reformers is the immediate certainty of divine forgiveness that is

independent of moral, intellectual, or religious preconditions. Its power is evident in the capacity of such a personal image of God, supported by scripture and personal experience, to defeat the anxiety of guilt and condemnation, fate and death. Yet given the doubt prevailing in the present age, the experience of divine forgiveness is subject to psychological explanation, and the idea of sin appears relative at best and meaningless at worst. (3) "Theological theism" tries by means of the various proofs for the existence of God to transform the divine-human encounter into a doctrine about two different beings that have existence independent of one another. This, however, can establish the existence of God only as a being beside others and bound to the subject-object structure of reality. Under the gaze of such a being of infinite knowledge and power the alienated human being is deprived of freedom and creativity. Against this kind of theism, says Tillich, the atheism of the nineteenth century was a justified response.

What Tillich calls "absolute faith," on the other hand, accepts and affirms despair and in so doing finds meaning within the disintegration of meaning itself. In "absolute faith" the depth and power of being is revealed in which the negation of being is embraced. Its object is the "God beyond God," the God who appears when the God of theism has disappeared in the anxiety of meaninglessness and doubt. This God is not a being but the ground of Being itself.

In an effort towards a radical recasting of the fundamental categories of theology, Bishop John A. T. Robinson (b. 1919) of Woolwich, England, employed a number of Tillich's insights together with some of the more famous ideas of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–45) and Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976). Writing in 1963, he affirmed, with Bultmann, that the Bible assumes a cosmology in which God is a being "up there." The Christian who is heir to the Copernican revolution tends to translate such categories into terms compatible with the modern view of the world. When we speak of God "up there," we really mean the God "out there." This, he thinks, is poor translation, for there are no vacant spaces in the universe in which God could really be said to reside. Robinson is willing to concede that the skies are empty, and that man, as Bonhoeffer had said, has come of age. The divine transcendence, he argues, is to be confronted not in the "beyond" or in the "height" but in the infinite and inexhaustible "depth" or "ground" of being revealed in the midst of life.

Neither Tillich nor Robinson referred to their thought as atheistic. Tillich suggested, however, that to understand God as the depth of being practically requires one to forget everything traditional that one has learned about God, and perhaps even the word itself. Robinson

stated that he did not yet have a name for the kind of religious thinking he wanted to bring about. In the United States, on the other hand, reflection of a similar sort was given a name that gained it an instant vogue: the theology of the death of God.

The "death of God" theology was a heterogeneous movement encompassing a variety of issues upon which its members often disagreed. Besides the question of God, it was concerned with a variety of forms of alienation within the Christian community, with the significance of the secular world and its intellectual norms, and with the significance for theology of the person and work of Jesus. The movement received its name from the title of a work published in 1961 by Gabriel Vahanian that announced the death of God as a cultural fact, the fact acknowledged by Bonhoeffer and Robinson that modern man functions intellectually and socially without God as a working hypothesis. This cultural fact, for Vahanian, implies a loss of the sense of transcendence and the substitution of a radically immanentist perspective in dealing with questions of human existence. That the death of God has occurred as a cultural fact in no way implies for him, however, that God himself has ceased to exist. God is, and remains, infinite and wholly other, still calling humanity to existential and cultural conversion. Vahanian's concern is for a transfiguration of culture in which the living God is freed from the false images that have reified him.

Vahanian's view of the reality of God sets him clearly apart from other persons associated with the death of God. For Paul M. Van Buren, writing in 1965, the issue for theology is how the modern Christian, who is in fact a secular being, can understand faith in a secular way. Taking his method from the philosophical tradition known as language analysis, he argues that not only the God of theism but also any other conception of God has been rendered meaningless to the modern mind. He concludes that when the language of Christian faith is sorted out, the gospel can be interpreted as the expression of a historical perspective concerning Jesus that has wide-ranging empirical consequences for the ethical existence of the Christian.

For William Hamilton, writing at about the same time, the death of God means the loss of the God of theism and the loss of "real transcendence." His response is a new understanding of Protestantism that liberates it from religion—from, that is, any system of thought or action in which God is seen as fulfilling any sort of need or as solving any human problem, even the problem of the loss of God. Hamilton's Protestant is a person without God, without faith in God, but also a person in protest against release or escape from the world by means of the sacred. He is a person led into

the affairs of the world and into solidarity with his neighbor, in whom he encounters Jesus and where alone he can become Jesus to the world.

In the thought of Vahanian, van Buren, and Hamilton, the death of God is a metaphor. In the work of Thomas J. J. Altizer, on the other hand, the death of God is to be taken literally. In a work published in 1967 he seems to be saying both that God did once exist and that he really did cease to exist. He believes that the death of God is decisive for theology because in it God has reconciled himself with the world. God, the sovereign and transcendent Lord of the Christian tradition, has taken the form of a servant and entered the world through Christ. With this, the realm of the transcendent and supernatural has become empty and God has died. With the death of God, we are liberated from fears and inhibitions imposed upon us by an awesome mystery beyond.

The view of these thinkers that belief in God is impossible, unnecessary, or wrong, has apparently not caused them to believe that they are disqualified as theologians. To this extent they stand alongside other forms of religious atheism we have encountered in the history of religious thought. It has certainly been objected by other theologians that the "death of God" theology does not authentically represent the Christian tradition. For the present it is sufficient that the death of God represents a controversy of significant dimensions in the record of Christian thought and that its influence continues to affect the development of theology today.

Conclusions. The forms of atheism that appear throughout the history of religions represent an important resource for the interpretation of religious thought today. Much of the reasoning behind the rejection of popular religion in ancient Greece or theism in India can be compared with the reasoning behind the rejection of theism in the West. The naturalism of ancient Greek and classical Indian philosophy invites comparison with naturalism in the West, the atheism of the Sophists with that of nineteenth-century Europe. The widespread secularistic mood in contemporary society bears comparison with the secularism of late Greek and Roman antiquity. And the ethical preoccupation of some exponents of the death of God invites comparison with the ethical practicality of the philosophies of ancient China. The major forms of religious atheism are perhaps less distinguished by the traditions they belong to than by affinities in inner structure.

From the present survey it is possible to conclude that doubt about the existence of God does not in itself imply the end of piety, ethics, or spirituality. Elaborate systems of ethical religious thought and action have been based both on the view that God does and that

God does not exist. The question that arises from the present survey is not whether it is possible to speak any longer about God but whether it is necessary to do so. The question whether it is possible for modern philosophy or theology to develop a compelling system of religious thought and action that rejects belief in God will be addressed more effectively as the dimensions of the question that emerge in differing historical situations are compared.

[*For futher discussions of philosophical criticisms of theism, see* Doubt and Belief *and the biographies of philosophers mentioned herein.*]

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GEORGE ALFRED JAMES

ATHENA (or Athene) was the Greek goddess of war and the arts and patroness of Athens. The Okeanid Metis, the "most knowing of the gods and men," helped Zeus to liberate his siblings, whom his father Kronos had swallowed. Metis then became Zeus's first consort. However, when she became pregnant, Zeus similarly swallowed Metis, fearing lest someday he in turn be overthrown by a scion. When it was time for Metis's daughter to be born, Zeus called on Hephaistos to relieve him of his labor pains (a splitting headache). Hephaistos wielded his ax, and out of Zeus's head, in full armor and with a war song on her lips, sprang Athena. This courageous, self-confident, clear-eyed daughter became Zeus's favorite child, the only one to carry his aegis and thunderbolt; she in turn revered him and boasted of being the child of him alone, of being motherless.

Such is the literary myth. The reality seems to be that Athena is a far older divinity than Zeus, a pre-Hellenic protectress of the Mycenaean citadel atop the Acropolis and of its royal household. As such she is indeed a goddess of the arts of war, a protectress of the city, but not a battle-lusty aggressor. Her central concern is the well-being of the community. "Cities are," it was said, "the gifts of Athena." She nurtures the children on whom the city's future depends and encourages its citizens in the arts and crafts so integral to civilized existence. She is particularly identified with the womanly arts of spinning and weaving. Like many spinning goddesses, she is a spinster, a virgin. Yet Athena's virginity implies no withdrawal from involvement with males, but rather an easy companionship undisturbed by sexual tension.

Loyal and resourceful, she is a friendly mentor to many of the heroes of Greek mythology—Perseus, Bellerophon, Herakles, and above all Odysseus, whose skeptical prudence and practical cunning so resemble her own. Although in late Classical times Athena came to be regarded as a personification of wisdom in the abstract, the *mētis* ("wisdom") she inherited from her mother is rather the common sense and the technical and artistic skillfulness she encouraged in her protégés.

Athena is often addressed as Pallas Athena. Pallas may originally have been a Hellenic warrior goddess whose cult was conflated with that of the Mycenaean Athena. The mythological explanation is that Pallas was a childhood friend whom Athena inadvertently killed during a fencing match. Athena erected a wooden image, a palladium, in the heart of the citadel to commemorate her foster sister, an image that came to represent Athena herself in her role as protectress of the polis.

Athena's emblems are the owl, a night-flying bird of prey, and the snake, which emerges from its hiding place in the rocks of the Acropolis; on her aegis she wears the head of dread Medusa. These are signs of the close connection between the Mycenaean household goddess and the Minoan snake goddess. Athena is the goddess of art, sublimation, transformation; the dark energies she draws on support communal human life. Since she is a goddess, the courage, intelligence, and accomplishment attributed to her are validated as authentically female attributes.

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CHRISTINE DOWNING

ATHENAGORAS, Christian apologist, flourished in Athens during the second half of the second century. Only one of his writings has been transmitted to us, *Legatio*, or *Presbeia*, which he composed between 176 and 180. He was a professional philosopher and, from the time of his conversion, a teacher of Christian doctrine. His apology in defense of the Christians could have been published as early as September 176 when the co-emperors Marcus Aurelius and his son Commodus visited Athens. More probably it was written after the anonymous letter from Gaul describing the persecution of Lyons in 177 became known in Greece, since the same expressions are used in both documents for the second and the third of the three main charges addressed against the Christians at that time: "Atheism, Thyestean banquets, and Oedipean unions" (3.1).

Legatio responds at length to the popular accusations against the Christians charging them with atheism and immorality. Athenagoras introduces the Christian doctrine of God with the help of an abundance of comparative quotations, from Homer to contemporary Middle Platonists. He stresses the absolute power of the creator and the creator's care for the world. He presents the Christian ethic as uncompromising. His doctrine of God culminates in trinitarian theology, but he avoids the doctrine of the incarnation. In his ethics he relies on the philosophical tradition of Stoicism. Thus, in assuming the correctness of many of the religious views of paganism, Athenagoras's philosophical theology rests on the sincere hope of a reconciliation between the church and the empire.

A treatise entitled *On the Resurrection*, traditionally attributed to Athenagoras, must be considered inauthentic. Its views on the general resurrection of the dead in the last days are best understood against the background of the debate over Origen's doctrine concerning resurrected bodies. This debate generated treatises of that sort only near the end of the third century. Differences in style are also discernible in comparison with *Legatio*.

Athenagoras remained virtually unknown by the later Christian generations in the ancient church. Only Methodius of Olympus, in the early fourth century, alludes to *Legatio* and identifies its author. In the tenth century, Arethas, archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, rediscovered the Athenian Christian philosopher of the second century and his apology.

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CHARLES KANNENGIESSER, S.J.

ATHIRAT (Heb., Asherah) was a Canaanite goddess formerly known almost exclusively from the Old Testament, but now richly—if ambiguously—documented in the cuneiform tablets found at Ugarit in Syria since 1929. At Ugarit Athirat is the consort of El, the head of

the Ugaritic pantheon. Her full title is *rbt aṭrt ym*, Lady Athirat of the Sea. The name *Athirat* possibly comes from the verb *aṭr*, "to tread," whence "lady who walks on the sea." The isolated title *qudšu* ("holy one") is surely an epithet of Athirat also.

In keeping with the Near Eastern phenomenon attested elsewhere, Ugaritic male deities tend to represent a reality statically (e.g., warriorhood, fertility), while their female consorts are thought of as bringing that reality into action (e.g., actual fighting, the act of physical fecundity). This can lead to considerable ambiguity within the Canaanite and other Near Eastern pantheons regarding roles and even sexuality. Hence, though El is "father" and "creator of creatures" at Ugarit and "creator of heaven and earth" in many Phoenician inscriptions, Athirat receives the epithet "creatress of the gods," and several Near Eastern personages bore names with meanings like "Athirat is my mother."

It would seem from certain inconsistencies within the Ugaritic texts that Athirat was originally a desert goddess who was adopted into the Ugaritic pantheon, where she received maritime characteristics. Besides being Lady of the Sea, whose servant is Dagayu ("the fisherman"), she is also a goddess of the steppe who goes out to the desert to suckle newborn gods and who has a servant, Qadesh-wa-Amrur, quite likely to be identified with the desert god Amurru.

Although she is the consort of El, it is not consistently attested that Athirat is the mother of El's offspring (she also has unnamed children of her own), and, indeed, she seems to have an antipathetic relationship to El's offspring at times. Perhaps the god Dagan, also an Eastern god absorbed into the Canaanite pantheon, is to be more closely associated with Athirat than hitherto has been thought. While Baal is called "son of El," he is also called "son of Dagan." Could this be a syncretistic attempt to link Baal with El's imported consort by way of a god formerly linked to Athirat?

The question of Asherah in the Hebrew Bible has provoked a considerable secondary literature because of its complexity. Asherah here seems to be a blending of several Near Eastern goddesses: Athirat (*athirat* and *asherah* are dialectical variants), Astarte, Anat, and the Mesopotamian goddess Inanna-Ishtar. Her consort is Baal, who is probably not simply Baal Hadad but also a blend of several gods.

In the Hebrew Bible, Asherah was a goddess of fertility, and her cult involved male temple prostitution. The extent to which this aspect of Canaanite worship had penetrated Israel's religion can be seen from *1 Kings* 18:17–19. Ahab accuses the prophet Elijah of being a troublemaker, and Elijah replies: "It is not I who have troubled Israel! It is you and your father's

house, because you have abandoned the commandments of Yahveh and followed the baals. Now then send and gather all of Israel to me at Mount Carmel, and the four hundred and fifty prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table." (See also *1 Kings* 14:23, 15:13; *2 Kings* 13:6, 21:7, 23:6ff.)

The Hebrew *asherah*, or more commonly the masculine plural *asherim*, can also refer to a cult place or to an object associated with Asherah. This latter was apparently a phallic stela, a symbol of human and agricultural fertility.

In Egypt, Athirat was called Qudšu, who again was quite likely an assimilation of the characteristics of other Near Eastern goddesses, most notably Anat. There are several stelae from Thebes dating from the Ramessid period, probably the products of expatriate Syrian workers, that hint at the complementary roles of god and goddess in the ancient Near East, wherein a goddess is the active realization of a godly principle. These stelae depict the Canaanite god Reshef, in this context a protector god, and Min, the local ithyphallic god of fertility, both facing inward toward Qudšu, who usually stands on the back of a lion, facing out. Qudšu subsumes iconographically the martial characteristics of Reshef and the fertility characteristics of Min, and she faces the world with them.

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WILLIAM J. FULCO, S.J.

ATĪŚA (982–1054), Indian scholar-monk regarded as a reformer of Tantric practices and founder of the Buddhist "path literature" in Tibet. Atīśa (more properly Atiśa) was invited to Tibet by Byan-chub-'od under the advice of Ye-śes-'od to revive Buddhism after Glaṅ-dar-ma's (d. 842) persecution of the religion. He is also variously known as Śrī Atīśa, Dīpaṃkararakṣita, Dīpaṃkara Śrījñāna, and Śrī Dīpaṃkarajñānapada in Sanskrit, and Jo-bo-rje Dpal-ldan, Mar-me-mdzad Dpal-ye-śes, and Dpal-ldan Atīśa in Tibetan.

The dates of Atīśa vary—some accounts give as his dates 980–1052, others as 982–1054; in any case, he lived for seventy-two years. Some sources claim that he

was born at Vikramapura, Dacca (East Pakistan); others claim him to be a native of Bhagalpur (Bihar); still others claim that he was the son of a king of Zahor, a country noted for Tantrism. His father was Kalyāṇaśrī, the king of Bengal, and his mother was Padmaprabhā. Recent studies tend to confirm that Atīśa was born in Bengal, was a member of a family with some royal blood, and lived from 980 to 1052. Accounts of his life can be found in the Tibetan historical literature (chos 'byuṅ) and the extensive biographical literature (rnam thar).

Atīśa's first religious encounter came at an early age, when he had a vision of the Vajrayāna goddess Tārā, who remained his tutelary deity throughout his life and to whom he was especially devoted. He sought a monk's career and studied at Nālandā. At the age of thirty-one, he went to Suvarṇadvīpa (Sumatra?), where he studied under Dharmapāla for twelve years. Upon his return to India he became steward of the Buddhist college Vikramaśīla, from which he left for Tibet in 1040 as the result of an invitation from Nag-tsho (b. 1011), who had been sent to the college for this purpose. After a year in Nepal Atīśa arrived in Gu-ge in 1042; from there he traveled to central Tibet, and finally to the Sñe-thaṅ Monastery, where he died.

Atīśa's activities in Tibet centered in and around western Tibet at the beginning, but after a few years he began to travel extensively. Within a short time he gained great fame for his scholarly abilities and for the bold stand he took in favor of religious reform in Tibet. He was not, however, accepted by everyone; 'Brog-mi (992–1074) and Mar-pa (1012–1096) are said to have avoided meeting him, and even Rin-chen-bzaṅ-po, who impressed Atīśa on their first meeting, was not always in accord with him, although he finally submitted to Atīśa and acknowledged his superiority. It is related that on his visit to the Bsam-yas Monastery, Atīśa discovered tantras that did not exist in India.

Atīśa's mission in Tibet was to restore monastic order and discipline. In 1057 he founded the monastery of Rwa-sgreṅ. His Bodhipathapradīpa (Tib., Byaṅ chub lam gyi sgron ma), written for the Tibetans as a manifesto of Buddhist reform, became the basis for the Lam Rim ("stages of the path") teachings of Tsoṅ-kha-pa (1357–1419).

Atīśa worked on many translations of the various Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras. He also must be credited for his important work on reckoning dates by a method in which the well-known cycle of twelve animals is complemented by the five elements, thus resulting in a sexagenary cycle. According to this work, the first year of the first cycle of sixty years is 1027 CE; all other dates, past and future, are derived from this year. Although Atīśa was instrumental in reviving Buddhism in Tibet,

his influence did not seem to last too far beyond his lifetime.

[See also Buddhism, Schools of, article on Tibetan Buddhism.]

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LESLIE S. KAWAMURA

ATONEMENT. [This entry consists of two articles that discuss the Jewish and Christian concepts of atonement.]

Jewish Concepts

Jewish conceptions of atonement consist of various strands reflecting the plurality of connotations of the Hebrew term kipper ("to make atonement"). Etymologically, the biblical term may mean (1) "covering up" (Ex. 25:17, Lv. 16:2), (2) "purging" or "wiping off" (Is. 27:9, Jer. 18:23), or (3) "ransoming" (Ex. 30:12, Nm. 35:31–32). Correspondingly, atonement may represent (1) the process of covering up sins to forestall retribution, (2) a form of catharsis that decontaminates individuals from impurities induced by sinful behavior, or (3) expiatory or propiatory acts designed to avert divine wrath and bring about reconciliation by redressing the imbalance caused by offenses against the deity.

Although the term kipper is also employed in the Torah (Pentateuch) with reference to the removal of ritual impurity, there is no suggestion whatsoever that the rites themselves are endowed with magical power. The desired results of expiation or purification are not viewed as the effect caused by the performance of rites. Atonement can only be granted by God; it is not the direct effect of any human action (see, for example, Leviticus 16:30).

Confession is specifically mandated by the Torah in

conjunction with the expiatory rites performed by the high priest on the Day of Atonement as well as with the sacrifice called the *asham* (guilt offering). Rabbinic Judaism construes this latter requirement as paradigmatic for all types of sacrifices offered with the intent to secure forgiveness, expiation, or atonement for sins. Unless preceded by confession, any *hat'at* (sin offering) or *asham* would be stigmatized as "a sacrifice of the wicked which is an abomination" (B.T., *Shav.* 12b). [*For further discussion of atonement by sacrifice, see* Biblical Temple.]

Repentance. Although the Torah refers only to confession, the rabbis of the Mishnah, Talmud and Midrashic works cite various biblical verses from the rest of the Hebrew Bible to interpret this formal requirement in a much broader sense. The act of confession is construed as verbalization of an internal process of *teshuvah*, the act of "turning" that involves not only remorse but a sincere effort to make reparation and the resolve to mend ways. The very possibility of *teshuvah* as the re-creation of the human self presupposes freedom of the will. Judaism maintains that human beings have the capacity to extricate themselves from the causal nexus and determine freely their conduct.

For all the emphasis upon *teshuvah*—the psychological transformation of the self wrought by human effort—one essential component of the traditional view is the notion that divine mercy is necessary to heal or redeem man from the dire aftereffects of sin. Because any transgression of a divine commandment through sins of omission or commission constitutes an offense against God and damages a person's relationship with the Creator, divine grace is required to achieve full atonement. It is for this reason that prayers for atonement are an integral part of the *teshuvah* process. There are, however, sins of such severity that *teshuvah* by itself cannot completely remove the stains of guilt. According to the classical formulation of the second-century tanna Rabbi Yishma'el:

He who transgressed a positive commandment and repented, is forgiven before he has moved from his place: as it is said, "Return, O backsliding children" [*Jer.* 3:14]. He who has transgressed a negative commandment and repented, repentance merely suspends [punishment] and only the Day of Atonement secures atonement. As it is said: "For on this day shall atonement be made for you . . . from all your sins" [*Lv.* 16:30]. He who has violated a law punishable by extirpation or capital punishment and has repented, repentance and the Day of Atonement suspend and only suffering completes the atonement, as it is said: "Then will I visit their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with strokes" [*Ps.* 89:33]. But he who has been guilty of the desecration of the divine name, repentance is incapable of suspending punishment, the Day

of Atonement cannot secure atonement, and suffering cannot complete it, but all of them together suspend the punishment and only death completes atonement, as it is said: "And the Lord of hosts revealed himself in my ears. Surely, this iniquity shall not be expiated till you die" [*Is.* 12:14].
(B.T., *Yoma'* 86a)

Expiation and Grace. The rabbinic tenet that "the dead require atonement" (*Sifrei Shoftim* 210) is further evidence that atonement is not merely a function of repentance. Repentance is only feasible for the living, yet Judaism encourages practices such as offering of charity, prayer, or Torah study in behalf of the deceased. Significantly, vicarious expiatory significance is attributed to the death of the high priest (J.T., *Yoma'* 7.3) or that of the righteous (B.T., *Mo'ed Q.* 28a). Similarly, according to a number of tannaitic opinions, the occurrence of the Day of Atonement in itself, and especially the performance of the rites of the scapegoat, may expiate some sins even of the nonrepentant (B.T., *Yoma'* 65b). It should, however, be noted that Menaḥem Me'iri (1249–1306/1310), a prominent French-Jewish authority, categorically rejects the possibility of atonement in the absence of at least minimal repentance (*Ḥibbur ha-teshuvah* 2.13). But while Jewish theology attributes expiatory efficacy to fasting, charity, and other cultic or ritual practices and for that matter to death and suffering, overriding importance is attached to catharsis. Significantly, tractate *Yoma'* 8.9 of the Mishnah concludes with 'Aqiva' ben Yosef's exclamation, "How happy are you Israelites! Before whom do you cleanse yourselves, and who cleanses you? Your father who is in Heaven."

Proper atonement calls for human initiative in returning to God, who will respond by completing the process of purification, ultimately leading to the reintegration of the fragmented human self and resulting in the restoration of a wholesome relationship between man and God. According to a Talmudic opinion, repentance is a necessary condition of the messianic redemption. In qabbalistic thought, repentance is not only deemed indispensable to national redemption but acquires metaphysical significance as a preeminent aspect of the process of *tiqqun 'olam* ("mending the world")—the returning of the alienated creation to its Creator.

[*For a discussion of the Day of Atonement, see* Ro'sh ha-Shanah *and* Yom Kippur. *To compare the normative concepts outlined above with those of other major Jewish traditions, see* Hasidism, *overview article, and* Ashkenazic Hasidism.]

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WALTER S. WURZBURGER

Christian Concepts

According to its linguistic origins *atonement* (at-one-ment) means "the condition of or resulting from being at one." It is one of the few English words that have become theological terms. The word occurs many times in the Old Testament, and this usage has influenced the New Testament and subsequent tradition. Its appearance in the Authorized (King James) Version as the translation of *katallagē* in *Romans* 5:11 ("through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement") consolidated its theological use. The Revised Standard Version, however, and nearly all modern versions translate *katallagē* as "reconciliation," leaving the New Testament in English now without the word *atonement*. In contemporary theological usage *atonement* has come to mean the process by which reconciliation with God is accomplished through the death of Christ. Its earlier usage tended to have as well the wider meaning of the end sought through the atoning process, as in reconciliation, redemption (in older Roman Catholic writing), and salvation (in Protestant orthodoxy).

Old Testament Background. The Hebrew root for atonement is *kpr*, which probably means "to cover" or perhaps "to wipe away." The Greek equivalent is *hilaskethai* and its derivatives. The system of sacrifice that was practiced by the Israelites was regarded as an institution graciously provided by God and had atonement as its aim. Its rationale may be seen in *Leviticus* 17:11: "it is the blood that makes atonement, by reason of the life." On the solemn yearly Day of Atonement the high priest went into the holy of holies to the covering over the ark, the mercy seat *(kaporet, hilastērion)*, where God was believed to appear and announce forgiveness of sins to his people.

Some scholars would translate *hilastērion* in *Romans* 3:25 ("whom God set forth to be a *hilastērion*") simply

as "mercy seat." Their feeling is that Paul meant to assert that the cross of Christ is now the place where God shows his saving mercy. Most translators, however, render the word in this context as either "propitiation" or "expiation," depending on whether they want to suggest that God's wrath must first be satisfied before he will forgive human sinfulness or locate the block to restored relationships not primarily in God but in the alienation that is created by the sin itself and is acted upon directly by Christ's atoning action. Strongly divergent theories of atonement were constructed later on the basis of this debate.

The prophets constantly warned against any automatic assumption that sacrifice of itself would provide forgiveness; they preached that God desires mercy and repentance (*Is.* 1:10–17). The ritual system of sacrifice was spiritualized in the Old Testament in the prophetic view of a new covenant to replace the original, Mosaic covenant (*Jer.* 31:31) and was personalized in the actions of the suffering servant of Yahveh (*Is.* 53) sent by God to become an *asham* ("guilt-offering") and to bear the sins of many in a redemptive act of self-oblation.

New Testament Foundation. The associations of atonement with animal sacrifice, the offering of incense, and payments of money disappeared in the New Testament except as vivid metaphors for elucidating the atoning life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and, especially, the "once for all" (*Heb.* 10:10) event of Calvary. When Christians say that the cross is the crucial point of the early preaching of the gospel, they do not so much make a pun as testify that the Atonement, whatever else it has done, has changed our language. It was probably inevitable that sacrificial language would be emphasized in describing the Atonement simply because the contemporary institution of sacrifice was well known to the early Christians (as it is not to us today) and because the actual penal process of crucifixion with its attendant shedding of blood suggested at once the religious ritual of sacrifice.

The Gospels and Jesus' Teaching. By parable and by direct discourse Jesus taught forgiveness of sins, relating God's forgiveness to forgivingness between people. Controversy swirled around Jesus' authoritative absolutions, a situation that perhaps more than any other raised for his Jewish hearers the question of his divine status or blasphemy. He regarded his death as likely not simply because many prophets had been martyred for the unpopularity of their message but because he saw it as controlled in some way by a divine must, as a decisive part of his mission to inaugurate the kingdom of God: "For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom *(lutron)* for many" (*Mk.* 10:45). Later questions about the various

agencies to whom the ransom would be paid were to determine variant forms of the Greek theories of atonement. The image of a ransom is commercial, indicating the price needed to buy a slave's freedom. Conjoined with the phrase "for many," which may invoke the sacrificial image of the servant in *Isaiah* who will deliver many from their sins, use of the word *ransom* points out the costliness of reconciliation.

A second saying attributed to Jesus in the Marcan tradition of the Last Supper also casts light on the pervasive problem of the divine must: "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many" (*Mk.* 14:24). This language is reminiscent of the previous saying about ransom, here with an emphasis on a new covenant, such as was foreshadowed in *Jeremiah*, and recalling God's liberation of the Israelites from Egypt. Paul could say, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." To the Marcan saying about the "blood of the covenant which is poured out for many" Matthew added, "for the forgiveness of sins" (*Mt.* 26:28), making explicit that the atoning action is because of sin.

John developed the image of "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (*Jn.* 1:29, 1:36). There are other references to the lamb in the *Book of Revelation*, such as *Revelation* 13:8, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Authorized Version). This disputed translation became a justification for subsequent interpretations of the Atonement that regarded the event at Calvary not as an isolated incident but as the sacramental expression of the eternal reality of God's suffering love for humanity. The *Letter to the Hebrews* expands the image of sacrifice, making it the basis for the most sustained theory of the Atonement to be found in the New Testament. The theological question for all theories of sacrifice is whether Christ's death was itself the decisive sacrifice to God or whether the wealth of sacrificial images employed in New Testament literature is simply a way of demonstrating that what was sought through the Old Testament system of sacrifice has, in fact, been completely and finally accomplished in the life and death of Christ.

Paul on the Atonement. Paul is our earliest written source for the dimensions of atonement in apostolic preaching: "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures" (*1 Cor.* 15:3). He used the images of Christ the victor over sin, wrath, the demons, and death, and also used the illustration of the law court. For Paul the atoning death and resurrection went beyond the merely human dimensions of salvation to include the world of spirits and of nature itself in its groaning and travail (*Rom.* 8:19–23).

Paul grasped the moral dilemma in all thought about the Atonement: how can a God of holiness and righteousness accept sinners without either destroying his holiness or sentimentalizing his love by an immoral indifference to evil? As a former Pharisee, Paul naturally used legal language to describe faith in Christ. He used the language of the law court provisionally, only to introduce the paradox of grace: God does not ultimately, in Christ, deal with humanity along the lines of retributive justice, which a human judge is obliged by oath to dispense. The revelation of God's righteousness "has been manifested apart from law" (*Rom.* 3:21). Expositions of the vicarious and representative work of Christ have been constructed from the penal implications of such Pauline texts as "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (*2 Cor.* 5:21). The problem with such expositions, however, is that they tend to subject God's gracious love to the necessities of a law court. The gospel according to Paul is that God actually **does** what no human judge should do: God in a revolutionary way actually accepts sinners. Jesus had taught a love of this quality and actualized it by associating with outcasts, sinners, the despised, and the victims of power and injustice in his society until its religious and political forces crucified him.

There is no single New Testament doctrine of the Atonement—there is simply a collection of images and metaphors with some preliminary analysis and reflection from which subsequent tradition built its systematic doctrines and theories. The New Testament asserts that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself in such a way that the act resembled a military victory, a king establishing his power, a judge and prisoner in a law court, a great ritual sacrifice before priest and altar, the payment of ransom for war prisoners or the payment of a redemption for a slave's freedom, the admission to responsible sonship within a family, and more. Tradition has tried to decide what parts of this picture should be taken literally and what parts metaphorically and has developed extended rationales, added new images according to the conditions of different eras and cultures, and established cross-relationships with other Christian doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the church, and the sacraments. Often it has tried to make one theory of the Atonement dominant over the others.

A Typology of Atonement Theories. Gustaf Aulén in his classic *Christus Victor* (1930) suggested three basic types of atonement theory: the classical type, the Latin type, and the subjective type. Combining these with additional categories from R. S. Franks's definitive *History*

of the Doctrine of the Work of Christ (1918) yields the following typology:

1. *Classical type:* Greek, patristic, Christus Victor, ransom, Eastern.
2. *Anselmian type:* Latin, objective, transactional, Western.
3. *Reformation type:* penal, objective, juridical, governmental, transactional.
4. *Moral-influence type:* Abelardian, subjective, exemplary, modern.
5. Other types are sacrificial, mystical, psychological, incarnational, and eucharistic in character.

This scheme is regarded as approximate and as bearing historic names that are sometimes not simply descriptive but are slanted by their supporters' claims or their detractors' criticisms. For this article I can select only a few of the most significant theories for analysis.

Classical theories of atonement. Aulén looked behind the dramatic mythology of the Greek fathers to find the theme of Christus Victor, a view that he claimed integrates ideas of the Incarnation, Atonement, and Resurrection into a unified concept of salvation. Ragnar Leivestad in *Christ the Conqueror: Ideas of Conflict and Victory in the New Testament* (1954) supplemented Aulén by describing Christ's struggle with the demons and Satan in his work, teaching, and, especially, healing. Aulén rooted his description in Paul's writings, carried it through the Eastern and Western fathers before Anselm, and found it expressed again in Martin Luther's buoyant feeling of being on the winning side. One version of the theory had the devil unjustly in possession of humanity; another affirmed the justice of the devil's hold; still another claimed that although the devil had no rights, God graciously withheld from forcibly stripping him of his gains. Special strategies against the devil were the mousetrap (the humanity of Christ as bait to hide his divinity) and Augustine's fishhook play. In addition to the Christus Victor theme there are in patristic theology the views of Christ as the bearer of incorruption (expounded by Athanasius in the fourth century), the revealer of truth and model of humanity, the physician of humanity, and the sacrificial victim (expounded by Gregory of Nazianzus, also in the fourth century). The contrast between the church's official dogma of the Incarnation as developed through the Council of Chalcedon (451) and the unofficial status of atonement theories has often been pointed out, but the difference can be easily exaggerated since the criterion for christological decision was usually how the proposed understanding of Christ's person would effect the salvation of humanity. There is growing agreement that the work of

Christ and the person of Christ must be integrated: Christ does what he is and is what he does.

Anselmian theories of atonement. *Cur deus homo* (Why the God-man?), written by Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, in about 1097, is the single most influential book on the Atonement. Anselm criticized all ransom-to-the-devil theories by turning them upside down and asserting that the ransom, which Anselm called "satisfaction," must be paid to God. Debate has gathered around the influence that feudalism and the ancient Teutonic customs of blood money had on Anselm, but the vital center of the Anselmian theory is a rationalization about satisfaction, which, together with contrition and confession, constitutes the three parts of the Latin sacrament of penance. Even the sacrificial images are reinterpreted in terms of satisfaction as their rationale. Since sin derogated from the honor of God and must be infinite in offense because it is against God, either punishment or the payment of an infinite satisfaction is required. Such a satisfaction finite man should but cannot pay. The answer to this dilemma becomes the God-man, whom Anselm described as bound by simple duty to lead a life of obedience but who, having lived a life of sinlessness, is not justly subject to the claim of death. Therefore Christ's death alone possessed the superfluous merit that made it an adequate satisfaction for the sins of humankind. There have been many criticisms of Anselm: that his confidence in reason is too great to explain mystery; that he quantified sin mathematically rather than personalizing it; that he concentrated so much on Christ's death that Jesus' life of sacrificial love is emptied, along with the Resurrection, of significance. The overarching objection is that rigid procedures according to legal justice demote God's love to a secondary place. Later medieval modification of Anselm (e.g., Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century) stressed acceptance by God rather than strict necessity as the ground for atonement. A penitential system of indulgences managed by the church grew up around the doctrines of Christ's superfluous merits.

Reformation theories of atonement. The Reformation opted for Anselm's unused alternative of punishment. John Calvin in the sixteenth century emphasized Christ's vicarious and substitutionary endurance of God's punishment on behalf of humankind or of the elect. The dominance of Anselmian analysis in Reformation orthodoxy and the Counter-Reformation can be demonstrated by showing that for the Roman Catholic the Atonement continued to be the basis for the ecclesiastical apparatus that mediated salvation while for the Protestant, looking at the Atonement through the doctrine of justification by faith, it became the reason

for rejecting that whole apparatus as unnecessary.

Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) substituted for the juridical image of a judge dispensing retributive justice the political image of a governor concerned for the public good and able to pardon humanity safely because of the deterrent effect of Christ's death. This governmental or rectoral theory Jonathan Edwards introduced into Calvinist thought in America in the eighteenth century.

Moral-influence theories. Theories of moral influence describe the Atonement as something accomplished in the hearts and minds of those who respond to Jesus' message and example of love—"love answers love's appeal" was the phrase used by Peter Abelard in the twelfth century to summarize this moral influence. The strength of this view lies in its primary emphasis upon the love of God rather than on God's wrath or justice. The intrinsic weakness of such theories lies in the widespread perception that such declarations by themselves have little power to free the sinner when they alone are seen as constituting the sum total of atonement rather than part of a total atoning activity initiated and carried through by Christ's action.

Horace Bushnell in *Vicarious Sacrifice* (1866), writing at the time of the American Civil War, took his illustrations of the Atonement from family relationships, friendship, and patriotism. Albrecht Ritschl in *Justification and Reconciliation* (originally published in 1870–1874 in German) expanded the responding agent from the individual only to a group. He stressed Jesus' reconciling love and faithfulness unto death as inspiring a community of ethical response in history. J. McLeod Campbell in *Nature of the Atonement* (1856) emphasized vicarious penitence. Robert C. Moberly in *Atonement and Personality* (1901) provided a broad view of the work of Christ as the perfect penitent by conceiving Christ's incarnating and atoning activity as continuing through the church and the sacraments in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Twentieth-century theories of atonement. The theology of Karl Barth has redirected thought to the objectivity of the Atonement, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Dorothee Sölle have developed the theme of Christ as representative. In a rehabilitation of the penal theory Leonard Hodgson in *The Doctrine of the Atonement* (New York, 1951) argued that in Jesus Christ the punisher and the punished are one. Anglicans and especially Roman Catholics under the influence of liturgical and biblical renewal, the return to patristic sources, and the impact of Vatican II have turned away from Jean Rivière's hitherto dominant claim (made early in the twentieth century) that Anselm's concept of satisfaction adequately expressed the meaning of sacrifice and toward the restoration of sacrificial language, both in liturgy and in theology.

Few doctrines of Christian faith have produced more theories than the doctrine of atonement, a fact that testifies to the witness of scripture, in which Christ's death is given decisive reconciling power and meaning, but no one theory or family of theories is presented as alone authoritative. The doctrine of atonement is the Christian answer to the human questions about ignorance, suffering, death, and sin, but always the alienation caused by sin is considered more basic than the three other evils. Christ "has broken down the dividing wall of hostility . . . so making peace and . . . [reconciling] us both to God in one body through the cross" (*Eph.* 2:14–16). Atonement as an expression of the mystery of God remains the reality at the core; interpretations of the how and the why of the process multiply as images and metaphors expand into theory and become in turn ancillary or dominant only to dissolve in changing cultural configurations and reappear later in new shapes and relationships. In our period the classical type of Christus Victor has been increasingly able to attract as satellites the Anselmian and the moral-influence theories. Perhaps the next development lies with a reformulation of the sacrificial theory, which, fortified by the use of liturgy and having come abreast of new understandings of sacrifice in the comparative history of religions, may for a time become a new primary center in its own right.

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WILLIAM J. WOLF

ATRAHASIS is a major Mesopotamian literary composition about the beginnings of humanity. First composed in the Old Babylonian period (1800–1600 BCE), it was read until the end of Assyro-Babylonian history. The outlines of the plot were first pieced together on the basis of Neo-Assyrian fragments (Laessøe, 1956), but fuller knowledge of the composition came after the publication (in volume 46 of *Cuneiform Texts from the British Museum*, 1965) of a three-tablet version of the text, which was written down and possibly (but not probably) even composed by a junior scribe named Ku-Aya around 1560 BCE, during the reign of Ammi-saduqa. An edition and English translation of the composition soon followed publication (Lambert and Millard, 1969).

Atrahasis is a "primeval history" that relates the events attendant on the creation of humanity, the problems arising after the creation, the near-destruction of humanity by a flood, and its re-creation—with some al-

tered conditions—after the flood. The work is clearly a parallel to the cosmological cycle in *Genesis* 2–9, and points out the essential cohesiveness of that cycle. *Atrahasis* has made us realize that the giving of laws to humanity, and in particular the regulation of bloodshed after the flood, were directly related to the cause of the flood: these laws were to prevent humans from again polluting the earth with bloodshed after the flood had cleansed the earth so that a new order might begin (Frymer-Kensky, 1977).

The composition begins with the phrase "Inuma anu awilum," meaning most probably "When the gods, like men [bore the work, carried the corvée basket]." Since pagan gods had to eat, they had to raise crops. The seven great gods seized power, and the rest of the gods worked at agriculture, irrigating the land with water from the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Ultimately they tired of working and rebelled, setting fire to their tools and marching to the house of Enlil, the god of wind, storms, and the terrestrial realm. Enlil called a council of the great gods. Unable to discover who was the leader of the rebellion, the great gods did not want to "break the strike." They realized that the other gods had been working very hard. Enki, the wisest of the gods, conceived a plan to create substitute workers. He instituted grand purification rituals for the gods and proposed the slaughter of one of them, Weilu (a god otherwise unknown), whose blood was mixed with clay in order to provide humanity with a "spirit." The mother goddess divided this clay into seven pairs of lumps, and after nine months seven pairs of humans were born.

After a break in the text, we read that something had gone awry: "Twelve hundred years had not yet passed when the land extended and the peoples multiplied. The land was bellowing like a bull, and the god became disturbed with their uproar. Enlil heard their noise and addressed the great gods: 'The noise of mankind has become too intense for me; with their uproar I am deprived of sleep.'" He then brought a plague. The plague was lifted when the people (on Enki's advice) worshiped only Namtar, the god of the plague. The problem recurred, and Enlil brought a drought, which was lifted when the people worshiped only Adad, god of rains and thunderstorms.

The middle tablet of the epic is fragmentary, but it is clear that the gods brought famine and salinization of the soil before deciding on the ultimate destruction, the flood. Since Enki had taken an oath not to intervene, he waited until Atrahasis (his human worshiper) came to the temple for a dream interpretation, and he then commanded Atrahasis to build a boat in order to save life. Atrahasis did so, and brought onto the ark his family

and animals, whereupon Enlil created a massive, destructive storm. Afterward, the gods sat thirsty and hungry, realizing what they had done by destroying humanity. At this point, it seems (the text is broken), the ark was revealed and Atrahasis offered a sacrifice. Enki gave new provisions and regulations, creating barren women, a demon to cause stillbirth and infant mortality, and classes of women who were not allowed to have children; thus childbirth was stopped. There were other provisions, but a large break in the text follows, after which the text concludes with "I have sung of the flood to all the peoples. Hear it."

The interpretation of this text is made difficult by gaps at key points, and by the use of certain terms whose meaning is a matter of dispute. The points at issue are (1) why Weilu was killed in the creation of mankind; and (2) the cause of the flood. The text is broken at line 47 of the first tablet; here the name of the rebellion's leader may have appeared, or it may be that no name was given. When the gods were asked who started the revolt they had exhibited solidarity, responding, "We all did." Some scholars, however, have argued that the leader must have been Weilu, whose death is to be viewed as a punishment, much like the killing of Kingu in the later *Enuma elish* (Moran, 1970). The argument hinges on the interpretation of the terms *ilu ishten* ("one god"), used to describe Weilu, and *temu* ("counsel, reason"), which Weilu is said to have. "One god" could be taken to mean "one god, any god," but it might also mean "leader god." The phrase "Weilu who had *temu*" means "Weilu who had sense," indicating that the god was killed to give humans rationality ("a spirit"). It can, however, also mean "Weilu who had the plan," thus indicating that Weilu was killed as a punishment and that humanity was created from a culpable being, whose "ghost" ("spirit") dwells amid humanity.

A similar argument concerns the reason for the flood. The most obvious solution is the interpretation that mankind made a great deal of noise because "the lands extended and the people multiplied," that is, that there was an overpopulation problem (Kilmer, 1972; Moran, 1971; Frymer-Kensky, 1977). Enlil, disturbed by this overpopulation, tried the typical population controls of plague, drought, and famine before realizing that these were only temporary solutions; he therefore wanted to put an end to humanity. Enki, however, set forth provisions limiting childbirth, and probably others, such as the creation of a limited life span, that are lost in the text's break. Noting the use of "noise" in the Sodom and Gomorrah story of *Genesis*, however, some scholars (Pettinato, 1968; Soden, 1973; Oden, 1981) have understood "noise" to be the negative noise of planning and plotting, and therefore the flood to be a punishment for

human evildoing. They argue that regulations to control human evil were provided in the missing section of the text.

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TIKVA FRYMER-KENSKY

'AṬṬĀR, FARĪD AL-DĪN (AH 540?–618?/1145?–1221? CE), Persian mystical poet, born in Nishapur and killed there during a Mongol raid on the city. Little is known of 'Aṭṭār's life except that he was an apothecary and practiced medicine in his store. In Nishapur, an important center of Islamic civilization, he would have received thorough training in literature and the religious sciences. Great poets and mystics living there had left a rich tradition of spiritual culture, to which 'Aṭṭār devoted both his soul and his poetic gift. He affiliated himself with no Ṣūfī order, however.

The unending search for truth and a burning desire for union with God are the overriding themes of his poems, which abound with tales of varying lengths that explain moral and mystical principles. Though passion-

ately committed to Islam and not nearly as skeptical as his fellow townsman 'Umar (Omar) Khayyām, 'Aṭṭār often expressed perplexity about the ultimate questions of existence. He was liberal and preached tolerance of other religions. His complaints about social injustice, poverty, tyranny, and the pain of disease and death, usually voiced in his verse by the so-called 'uqalā'-i majānīn, the "wise crazy men," have a philosophical tone.

'Aṭṭār, who was more a Ṣūfī poet than a theorist of mysticism, did not develop a new system of thought but followed a moderate path, combining faith and reason. More than many other Ṣūfīs, he preached the necessity of obedience to the laws of Islam. 'Aṭṭār's love of the prophet Muḥammad, expressed in glowing terms such as "the king of the world and the sun of creation," penetrates and animates his verse; in many long sections of the preambles and epilogues of his poems he praised the Prophet with symbols such as light, the rose, the beloved, and the soul to demonstrate Muḥammad's central position in Islam.

'Aṭṭār wrote numerous epic poems, a large collection of lyrical verse with religious overtones, and one hagiographical prose work, Tadhkirat al-awliyā' (Biographies of the Saints), all in Persian. His fame rests, however, upon three original verse works. (1) Manṭiq al-ṭayr (Conversation of the Birds) describes the journey of thirty birds (sī murgh) in search of their king. They traverse the seven valleys (stations of the seeker) of Search, Love, Gnosis, Dependence upon the Divine, Unity, Bewilderment, and Annihilation, recognizing at last that they themselves are the Simurgh, the deity or divine phoenix (sīmurgh) they have been seeking. (2) Muṣībat-nāmah (Book of Affliction) tells of the mystic's tormented soul, which, in its desperate quest for God, appeals in turn to forty different cosmic or mythical beings for help, ultimately realizing that God dwells within the soul itself. 'Aṭṭār's emotional expressions of longing for God in this book are very appealing. (3) Ilāhī-nāmah (Divine Book) centers upon the theme of renunciation of worldly attachments. Various worldly interests are defended by six princes who, in debate with their father, are shown one by one the vanity of their aspirations and spurred on to loftier goals.

Along with Sanā'ī before and Rūmī after him, 'Aṭṭār occupies a significant place in Iran's literary history. Pure in mind, sincere in thought, and eloquent in speech, he made an impact that has resounded throughout the eastern lands of Islam for centuries.

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HESHMAT MOAYYAD

ATTENTION.

ATTENTION. The subject of attention has until recently been largely confined to the domain of experimental psychology. Researchers have sought to measure and explain such things as the selective capacity of attention, its range and span, the number of objects that it can appreciate simultaneously, and the muscle contractions associated with attentional efforts. Such work has been carried on amid considerable disagreement over basic definitions of the phenomenon of attention itself.

Attention as a Religious Phenomenon. In recent years, however, the subject of attention has begun to generate significant interest among students of religion. Increasing study of the various spiritual disciplines in man's religious traditions has indicated that attention plays a central role therein. Specifically, attention appears to be a sine qua non and common denominator of many of the forms of mental prayer and meditation found in the traditions. To further suggest that this is so and to discuss the nature and significance of contemplative attention are the central tasks of this article.

The investigation of the religious phenomenon of attention has been led by a small number of Western psychologists uncomfortable with the assumptions about human nature reigning in their field. Many have been influenced by Asian wisdom traditions and their promise of extraordinary psychological development, culminating in "liberation," "enlightenment," or "self-realization." If these traditions contained even a grain of truth, these explorers seemed to reason, then Western psychology's estimation of human potential was absurdly

low. That Asian wisdom offered well-defined procedures through which its claims might be explored and validated greatly increased the interest shown them by these empirically trained psychologists. Broadly speaking, this was the beginning of a new investigation into the psychotransformative factors of man's contemplative life, an investigation that, although initially rooted in Asian traditions, has begun to extend into Western religious traditions as well. The widely applicable yet tradition-neutral concept of attention has been central to this work.

Attention in the Traditions. Practices that strengthen the capacity for concentration or attention play a role in most great religious traditions. The importance of developing attention is most readily seen in the great traditions that arose in India, namely Hinduism and Buddhism. From the Upanisadic seers down to the present day there is in India an unbroken tradition of man's attempt to yoke his self (body and mind) to ultimate reality. Yoga takes on many forms, but its essential psychological form is the practice of one-pointed attention or concentration *(citta-ekāgratā)*. Whether by fixing the attention on a mantra or on the flow of the breath or on some other object, the attempt to quiet the automatized activities of the mind through concentrated attention is the first step and continuing theme of Hindu psychospiritual yoga.

It could hardly be otherwise for the traditions that stemmed from Gautama Buddha. The *samatha* and *vipassanā* forms of meditation in the Theravāda tradition require as their root and anchor an ever increasing ability to attend, to hold one's attention fast without relinquishing it to the various psychological forces that tend to scatter it. *Samatha* is the cultivation of one-pointed attention and is the common starting point for all major types of Buddhist meditation. *Vipassanā* meditation consists in the deployment of the concentrated attention developed in *samatha* from point to point within the organism, with the intent of understanding certain Buddhist doctrines at subtle experiential levels. Though the attention sought in *vipassanā* meditation is not one-pointed in the sense of being fixed on a single object, it remains a highly concentrated and directed form of attention, the very antithesis of dispersed mental wandering. Likewise, the Tibetan practice of visualization, which is attempted only after preparatory training in *samatha*, is a way of developing the mind's ability to remain steadfastly attentive by requiring it to construct elaborate sacred images upon the screen of consciousness. The two practices central to the Zen tradition, *kōan* and *zazen*, have as their common denominator the practice of sustained, vigilant attention. Moreover, the major contemplative schools of Buddhism stress the

virtue of mindfulness, the quality of being present, aware, and, in a word, attentive.

By the fourth century BCE the ancient Taoists had already developed methods of meditation and trance induction. They were called *tso-wang* and *tso-ch'an* and were fundamentally a training in concentration by the fixation of attention on the breath. How much the origin of these practices owed to Indian influence is not known.

When we turn to the three great Western monotheisms, the phenomenon of attention is not so starkly visible. Nevertheless it is there. Broadly speaking, spiritual disciplines in the monotheisms are not so fully developed as their cousins in the East. Still, these monotheisms contain profound mystical dimensions, and it is there we must look for the practice of attention.

The actual practices and methods of Jewish mystical prayer are difficult to determine. Qabbalist scholar Aryeh Kaplan states that "some three thousand Kabbalah texts exist in print, and . . . the vast majority deal with theoretical Kabbalah" (*Meditation and Kabbalah*, New York, 1982, p. 1). There are also monumental problems of translation and interpretation. References to method can, however, be found intermittently in the ancient Talmudic texts, quite frequently in the works of Avraham Abulafia and some of his contemporaries, in the Safad qabbalists of the sixteenth century, in the works of Isaac Luria, and in the Hasidic texts. The key terms are *hitbodedut* ("meditation"), *hitboded* ("to meditate"), and *kavvanah* ("concentration, attention, intention"). The first two come from a root meaning "to be secluded." They often point beyond mere physical seclusion, however, to the seclusion beyond the discursive activity of the mind attained through concentration. *Kavvanah* likewise refers to a concentrative or attentive form of prayer capable of inducing an altered, "higher" state of consciousness. For the Jewish mystical tradition as a whole, mantralike repetitions of sacred liturgical words seem to be the central vehicles for the training of attention, but references to concentration upon mental images, letter designs, and color and light visualizations can also be found in the texts. Concentrative exercises are also linked with bodily movements and the movement of the breath. Some of the exercises prescribed by the thirteenth-century Abulafia involve long, complex series of instructions and seem to require massive attentive capability to perform without distraction. In this they seem akin to the Tibetan Buddhist practice of elaborate visualization.

In the Christian world we find the Eastern Orthodox "Prayer of the Heart," or "Jesus Prayer," a Christian *mantra* that contemplatives repeat in order to recollect themselves and to unify attention, thereby opening their

hearts to the divine presence. The bulk of contemplative texts in the Roman Catholic tradition, like those of the Judaic tradition, are concerned with theory and doctrine rather than specifics of method. In the early Middle Ages one can find references to contemplation as a seeking for God in stillness, repose, and tranquillity, but the specificity ends here. The late Middle Ages witnessed among contemplatives the growth of a prayer form called *lectio divina*, or meditative reading of the scriptures. Cistercian monk Thomas Keating describes *lectio divina* as the cultivation of a "capacity to listen at ever deepening levels of inward attention" (*America*, 8 April 1978). Ladders of progress in mystical prayer abound at this time, but one is hard pressed to find any advice on how to climb them. Practical mysticism comes more fully into bloom with the arrival of Teresa of Ávila and John of the Cross in the sixteenth century. In the opinion of Jacques Maritain, the latter remains the prototypical practitioner of the Roman Catholic mystical way, *the* mystical doctor and psychologist of the contemplative life *par excellence*. And John's way was the way of inner silence, of nondiscursive prayer, of states of mind brought about by what he called "peaceful loving attention unto God." Lately an attempt has been made to popularize this kind of contemplative attention in the "centering prayer," another *mantra*-like technique, for focusing attention and quieting the mind, similar to the Jesus Prayer of Eastern Orthodoxy.

In the world of Islam we have the contemplative practices of both silent and vocal *dhikr*, again a *mantra*-like repetition, usually of the names of God, aimed at harnessing the will and its power of attention. Javad Nurbakhsh, spiritual head of the Nimatullahi order of Ṣūfīs, writes that *dhikr* (Pers., *zikr*) "is the total and uncompromised attention to God" (*In the Paradise of the Sufis*, New York, 1979, p. 32). The purpose of *zikr*, the remembrance of the divine name, "is to create a 'unity of attention'. Until this is attained the disciple will be attentive to the various attachments of the self. Therefore, he should try to incline his scattered attention to the all encompassing point of Unity" (ibid., p. 20). A more generic term for the kind of meditative attention achieved in *dhikr* is *murāqabah*. *Murāqabah* is described as a "concentration of one's attention upon God," as the "presence of heart with God," "the involvement of the (human) spirit *(rūḥ)* in God's breath" and the "concentrating of one's whole being upon God" (ibid., p. 72). *Murāqabah*, the Ṣūfīs say, is not only a human activity but a divine one as well: it is because God is constantly attentive to us that we should be constantly attentive to him.

Two men who have drawn on the traditions listed above and whose eclectic writings have had a signifi-

cant impact among those interested in self-transformation are G. I. Gurdjieff and Jiddu Krishnamurti. Crucial to the Gurdjieff work is the exercise of "self-remembering," fundamentally an attempt to develop sustained, undistracted, observational attention both outwardly toward experience and, at the same time, inwardly toward the experiencer. This particular aspect of the Gurdjieff work is very similar to the "bare attention" exercises of Buddhist *vipassanā* meditation. Krishnamurti teaches that the practice fundamental to psychological transformation is "choiceless awareness." It is, again, the cultivation of sustained, observational, nonreactive attention to inner and outer experience. In isolation from the rest of Krishnamurti's teaching, this form of attention does not differ significantly from either that of the Gurdjieff work or Buddhist "bare attention."

The preceding survey is not to be understood as implying that the training of attention is the same in every tradition or that it occupies the same relative importance within the various traditions. Quite to the contrary, attention is in these traditions developed in a variety of ways, to varying degrees of depth, within strikingly different contexts, and to apparently different ends. Given the diverse group of contemplative phenomena to which the word *attention* applies, the central task of this article, a general and synthetic account of the nature and significance of contemplative attention, is fraught with difficulty. Needless to say, the following analysis can only be expected to apply "more or less" to the various specific traditions, yet it does claim to indicate the general outlines of something common to them all. Moreover, such a synthetic account is not in vain, for despite the differentiating factors surrounding the training of attention in the various traditions, there seem to be some unitive factors as well. Summarily, the traditions mentioned above conform in the understanding that the human mind in its ordinary state is somehow fragmented, unfree, and given to dispersion. Within each tradition there has evolved at least some kind of practice leading to mental stability, unity, control, and integration. Furthermore, in each tradition we discover the assumption that such psychological transformation can make reality and truth experientially more accessible.

The Nature of Contemplative Attention. Attention is, of course, a concept that occurs outside the domain of religious praxis. It is part of the vocabulary of everyday mental functioning, and even there it seems to be overworked, a single, blunt term for a wide variety of mental states. The temptation to think of it as one thing should be resisted. It is better to think of it as a spectrum that reaches from the virtual absence of attention,

as in sheer daydreaming and mechanically determined mental flux, to acutely active alertness. Though contemplative practices themselves admit of a wide variation, the quality of attention that they require and at which they aim resides at the upper end of the spectrum. The varieties of contemplative attention, in other words, resemble each other more than any one of them resembles that uneven and intermittent phenomenon of ordinary mental functioning we usually call attention. Some further notion of the relative difference between ordinary kinds of attention and the kinds of attention at which contemplative practices aim must be developed if we are to avoid confusion later on.

Ordinary attention may be described as discursive, intermittent, and passive. It moves incessantly from object to object, its intensity "flickers," often succumbing to mental wandering, and it is reactive, or "passive," in relation to some sequence of external objects or to the autonomous stream of consciousness. Let us take, for example, the act in which the reader is currently engaged. You are following this exposition closely, attempting to understand it. Surely this is attention rather than inattention. The contemplative would agree. But he would suggest that this attention is discursive, and largely passive. In this particular case, my words are doing the discursing for your attention, leading it from place to place. Moreover, it is highly likely that, while reading, your attention will have wandered a surprising number of times, pulled down one associational path or another by autonomous psychic fluctuations. Even if you now turned away from this article and turned inward to work out a chain of reasoning, it is likely that you would do so in a state of predominantly passive attention, for such creative activity largely involves a sorting out of what the automatic activity of the psyche presents. Only in the most disciplined and highly concentrated feats of thought is passivity reduced to a minimum and the gap between ordinary and contemplative attention closed. However, the intellective modes I have just mentioned are hardly characteristic of the run of ordinary mentation. There, the discursive, intermittent, and passive qualities of attention are fully evident. In ordinary mentation, attention is not a quality of mind that we bring to experience, but something that occurs, rather haphazardly, as our organism becomes momentarily more interested in some inner or outer sequence of phenomena. Ordinary attention comes and goes without our consent; it is not something we *do*, but something that *happens* to us. For most of us most of the time, "attention" is stimulated, conditioned, and led by mobilizations of energy along the habit-pathways within our organism so that when

it confronts its object it is always faced, as it were, by a *fait accompli*.

The attention at which contemplative exercises aim, then, may be distinguished not only from sheer inattention but from ordinary discursive attention as well. Contemplative attention is relatively nondiscursive, sustained, and uncapitulatingly alert. In the majority of contemplative exercises, an effort is made to prevent attention from being diffused centrifugally; rather, the effort is to consolidate it centripetally and to maintain its sharpness. I shall use the word *concentrative* to name attentional efforts having these characteristics. Contemplative exercises thus aim at concentrative attention, but also at something that has no counterpart in ordinary mentation and can be properly understood only in reference to the attempt to establish concentrative attention. It may be called nonreactive or receptive attention. Concentration and nonreactivity (or receptivity) are the prime distinguishing characteristics of contemplative attention, and both must be kept in mind in order to understand the psychospiritual significance of attentional training.

Some literature on the psychology of meditation has used the terms *concentrative* and *receptive* to name exclusive categories of attentional practice. This can be misleading, however, as contemplative practices seem universally to share a "concentrative" element. Rather, the true categorical distinction is between focalized and defocalized attention. For example, the classical Yoga system of Patañjali requires an extreme focalization of attention on a single point or object for the purposes of absorption of enstasis. In contrast, Sōtō Zen's *shikantaza* prescribes a *de*focalized attention to the entire screen of consciousness with the proviso that one attend to what arises without reaction or discursive elaboration. But "focalized" and "defocalized" do not translate into "concentrative" and "receptive" for the simple reason that defocalization does not imply a lack of those qualities I have named "concentrative." Contemplative attention may be defocalized, open to the flow of mental contents, but it does not think about them or get carried away by them. It is, in fact, a "nonthinking," that is, themeless and nondiscursive attention, even though defocalized, and the directive for attention to remain acutely alert and sustained applies fully. Without these concentrative qualities, the description of defocalized meditation would be a description of daydreaming. Furthermore, even the purest form of defocalized meditation, Sōtō Zen's *shikantaza*, is, according to some Zen teachers, too difficult for beginners. To practice it fruitfully requires that a student already have a well-developed attentive ability derived from preliminary train-

ing in one-pointed attention to the movement of breath, a *kōan*, or some other object. In other words, even the purest form of so-called receptive meditation has roots in focalized, concentrative efforts.

Although focalization and defocalization refer to actual distinctions in the deployment of attention found in contemplative exercises, this distinction is of secondary importance. Of primary importance is the discovery that contemplative practices universally require the aspirant to develop an attentional capacity that, unlike his or her ordinary attention, is relatively nondiscursive, uncapitulatingly alert, and sustained. It is in this sense that contemplative efforts from qabbalistic repetitions of the divine name to Theravāda Buddhists' bare attention have a common concentrative element.

Of equal importance is the common receptive or nonreactive element. It stems from unavoidable failure in the attempt to maintain concentrative attention. No one attains attentive equipoise for the mere wishing, and the problem arises regarding what is to be done when distractions occur. Concentrative work is constantly interrupted by autonomous mobilizations of psychic energies that dissolve the unity of attention and carry it away on a stream of associations. What then? There are only two choices: to react with frustration and judgment (in which case one has unwittingly slipped into the very egocentric perspective from which contemplative exercises are trying to extricate one) or simply to observe the distraction nonreactively, to note it, accept it, and then gently bring the mind back to its concentrated mode. Contemplative traditions clearly tend to encourage the latter choice. The theistic constant of "acceptance of God's will," the Christian doctrine of *apatheia* ("indifference"), Buddhist *upekkha* ("equanimity"), Hindu *karmayoga* (acting without seeking the fruits of action), and Taoist *wei-wu-wei* ("the inaction of action")—all of these, when brought to bear on contemplative exercises, encourage the attitude of nonreactivity. To be nonreactively attentive is, for theistic contemplatives, to bring no new sinful self-willfulness to the practice of contemplation; for nontheistic contemplatives it is to bring no new *karman* to a process meant to dissolve it.

Given the fact that the deep-seated habit patterns of the psyche will repeatedly overpower an inchoate concentrative ability and assuming that the practitioner will repeatedly attempt to establish active, concentrative attention, his constant companions in all of this are impartiality, equanimity, and nonreactive acceptance. When concentrated attention falters, one is to be a nonreactive witness to what has arisen. Whatever emerges in the mind is observed and allowed to pass without

being elaborated upon or reacted to. Images, thoughts, and feelings arise because of the automatism of deeply embedded psychological structures, but their lure is not taken. They are not allowed to steal attention and send it floundering down a stream of associations. One establishes and reestablishes concentrated attention, but when it is interrupted one learns to disidentify with the contents of consciousness, to maintain a choiceless, nonreactive awareness, and to quiet the ego with its preferences.

Should this description appear distinctly Asian and raise doubts regarding its relevance to contemplative prayer practices in the monotheisms, consider, by way of balance, this passage from *Your Word Is Fire* (1977), a work on Hasidic prayer:

> Any teaching that places such great emphasis on total concentration in prayer must . . . deal with the question of distraction. What is a person to do when alien thoughts enter his mind and lead him away from prayer? . . . The Baal Shem Tov . . . spoke against the attempts of his contemporaries to . . . do battle with distracting thoughts. . . . He taught that each distraction may become a ladder by which one may ascend to a new level of devotion. . . . God [is] present in that moment of distraction! And only he who truly knows that God is present in *all* things, including those thoughts he seeks to flee, can be a leader of prayer. (pp. 15–16)

Concentration and nonreactivity are thus to be conceived as different but complementary modes of attention, which, it may be conjectured, occur in different and constantly changing ratios across the wide variety of contemplative, attentional practices. In tandem they allow the practitioner progressively to achieve disidentification from the conditioned mental flow and thus to observe that flow objectively and impartially. The dynamics and import of this process can now be discussed.

Significance of Attentional Exercises. The datum against which the significance of attentional exercises is to be understood is the relatively ceaseless and autonomous profusion of mental contents in ordinary conscious experience. Ordinary states of human consciousness may be said to be relatively noisy and dispersed, and the religious traditions that contain attentional exercises do so based on a belief that even ordinary mental turbulence is antithetical to the quiet clarity, recollection, and self-possession needed to understand and appreciate reality in subtler than usual ways. Most spiritual traditions thus contain some notion or other of the false consciousness, or false self, which when overcome, rendered transparent, or otherwise transcended, allows the self-manifesting quality of truth to disclose itself.

Let us say, therefore, that the central significance of attentional exercises is to release the human being from bondage to the machinations of the false self. And just as one might attempt to explain an eraser by referring first to what it erases, an explanation of the significance of contemplative attention is best begun with a notion of the false self that it combats.

Human beings experience a persistent need to preserve and expand their being, and thus each of us, from birth, undertakes what may be called a self-project. Everyone longs to be special, to be a center of importance and value, to possess life's fullness even unto immortality, and everyone spends energy in pursuit of those things that, according to his or her level of understanding, will fulfill these longings. According to many contemplative traditions, such longing is grounded in a profound truth: ultimately, we share in the undying life of the ultimately real. Unfortunately, however, the ego transcendence that contemplative traditions prescribe is usually rejected in favor of endless vain attempts to expand the ego in the external world through possession, projection, and gratification.

From the beginning, then, the self-project determines one's appropriation of experience in two ways. One is through desire for and attachment to any loci of thought or experience that affirm the self and enhance its will to be. The other is by defense against or aversion for those loci of thought or experience that negate the self and impress upon it its contingency and dispensability. The lineaments of personality are built up in these ways. The psyche becomes a multidimensional webwork of likes and dislikes, desires and aversions, both gross and subtle, that manifest personality in the same way that black and white dots can create the illusion of a face. Time and repetition harden parts of the webwork into iron necessity. With increasing automatism, experiences both internal and external are evaluated according to whether they affirm or negate the self-project. The self-project gradually unfolds into an egocentric system in which beliefs, feelings, perceptions, experiences, and behaviors are automatically viewed and assessed around one's sense of value and worth as an individual. By the time a human being is old enough even to begin to take an objective view of the self-project, he or she is hopelessly enmeshed in it. Predispositions have become so implicit and unconscious that the ego has little chance of recognizing the extent to which its psychological life is already determined. One automatically limits, selects, organizes, and interprets experience according to the demands of one's self-project. The chronic quality of this self-centeredness and the distance it creates between the person and reality is the basis for the common psychological wisdom behind, for example, the Christian's insistence of the "originality" of sin, the Buddhist's notion of the beginninglessness of ignorance, or the Muslim's belief about the recalcitrant quality of *ghaflah*, the forgetfulness of God.

The false self can thus be understood as a metaphor for psychic automatism, that is, automatic, egocentric, habit-determined patterns of thought, emotive reaction and assessment, and imaginary activity that filter and distort reality and skew behavior, according to the needs of the self-project. Having hardened into relatively permanent psychological "structures," these predispositional patterns may be conceived as constantly feeding on available psychic energy, dissolving it into the endless associational flotsam in the stream of consciousness. Energy that would otherwise be manifested as the delight of open and present-centered awareness is inexorably drawn to these structures and there disintegrates into the image-films and commentaries—the "noise"—that suffuse ordinary consciousness. As psychologist Charles Tart sees it, "there is a fluctuating but generally large drain on awareness energy at all times by the multitude of automated, interacting structures whose operation constitutes personality" (*States of Consciousness*, New York, 1975, p. 23). The psychic machinery runs by itself, ever exacerbating one's slavery to conditioning, and, moment to moment, steals attention from the real present and blows it like fluffy spores of milkweed down the lanes of the past or up the streets of the future. Our imaginative-emotive distraction is so constant that we come to accept it as normal. We see it not as the drain of energy and loss of being it actually is but as the natural state of affairs.

What allows the self-aggravating automatism of the false self to function unchecked is, in a word, *identification*. Every desire, every feeling, every thought, as Gurdjieff once put it, says "I." As long as we are unconsciously and automatically identifying with the changing contents of consciousness, we never suspect that our true nature remains hidden from us. If spiritual freedom means anything, however, it means first and foremost a freedom from such automatic identification. Contemplative traditions affirm in one metaphor or another that our true identity lies not in the changing contents of consciousness but in a deeper layer of the self, mind, or soul. To reach this deeper layer one must slowly disentangle oneself from automatic identification with the contents of consciousness. That is, in order for the self to realize the *telos* adumbrated for it in the doctrines and images of the contemplative tradition to which it belongs, it is necessary to cut beneath psychological noise, to disidentify with it so as to understand it objectively rather than be entangled in it, and, ulti-

mately, to dismantle the very habit-formed structures that ceaselessly produce it.

Once automatism and identification are understood to be the sustainers of the false self, we are in a position to understand the psychotransformative power of concentrated, nonreactive attention. For whether a human being is a Muslim repeating the names of God or a Theravāda Buddhist practicing bare attention, he or she is, to one degree or another, cultivating the disidentification that leads to the deautomatization of the false self.

The mere act of trying to hold the mind to a single point, an act with which higher forms of meditation begin, teaches the beginner in a radically concrete and experiential way, that he or she has little or no control over the mental flow. All attentional training starts with this failure. This is the first great step in the work of objectifying the mental flow, that is, of seeing it not as something that "I" am doing but something that is simply happening. Without this realization no progress can be made, for one must first know one is in prison in order to work intelligently to escape. Thus, when the Christian is asked to concentrate his attention solely upon God, when the Muslim attempts to link his attention solely to the names of God, when the Tibetan Buddhist attempts with massive attention to construct elaborate images of Tārā on the screen of consciousness, the first lesson these practitioners learn is that they *cannot* do it. Ordinary mentation is freshly understood to be foreign to the deepest reality of one's being. The more regularly this is seen the clearer it becomes that one is *not* one's thoughts, and the more profoundly one understands the distinction between consciousness as such and the contents of consciousness. Objectification of the contents of consciousness and disidentification with them are natural outcomes.

At the same time that a contemplative learns that mental flow is not the same as identity, what one deeply is, he or she understands that neither is it the ultimate reality he or she seeks to know. The theocentric contemplative is reminded that God cannot be captured within a construct of consciousness and that, as John of the Cross says, God does not fit into an occupied heart. The Zen Buddhist understands that the *kōan* whose solution may reveal the Buddha nature cannot be solved by an intellectual construct. Not surprisingly, the metaphor of self-emptying spans contemplative traditions. The lesson everywhere reveals that mental flow can neither be identical with nor contain the reality-source one seeks. The aspirant is thus doubly disposed to disvalue the incessant discursion of the mind, to disidentify and detach himself or herself from it. Increasing objectification of mental contents enhances our ability to assess motivation and impulses *before* they are translated into action, thus permitting increasing freedom from impulsive behavior. One can imagine the pace of life slackening and one's behavior becoming smoother and more deliberate. Attention becomes less a slave to external stimuli and more consolidated within.

As attentional training progresses and detachment from the automatized flow of mental contents is achieved, the coiled springs responsible for that very automatism begin to unwind. In other words, disidentification leads to deautomatization.

One elaboration must suffice. The incessant discursion of the mind may be conceived as the result of the useless consumption of energy by the overlearned structures or patterns of the psyche. Associational thought-sequences that seem virtually unending are a common pattern of such consumption. An increasingly quiet and disidentified attention could catch associational sequences in their beginnings and thus forestall the automatic stimulation of still other sequences and some of the behavior that flows impulsively therefrom. The integrity of the automatized processes, however, depends upon reinforcement through repetition. Forestalling associational sequences and interrupting habitual behavior would weaken that integrity. Unwholesome impulses caught by attention would be deprived of a chance to bear fruit in action or associational elaboration. Attention—or presence, or mindfulness—may thus be conceived as depriving predispositional patterns of their diet.

Contemplative attentional exercises are, in other words, strategies of starvation. Every moment that available energy is consolidated in concentrative and nonreactive attention is a moment when automatized processes cannot replenish themselves. In the dynamic world of the psyche, there is no stasis: if automatisms do not grow more strongly solidified, they begin to weaken and dissolve. When deprived of the nutriment formerly afforded to them by distracted states of mind, the automatized processes of the mind begin to disintegrate. Contemplative attention practiced over a long period of time may dissolve and uproot even the most recalcitrant pockets of psychological automatism, allowing consciousness to re-collect the ontic freedom and clarity that are its birthright.

Deautomatization, then, is a psychological, tradition-neutral term that describes an essential aspect of the process of spiritual liberation, the freeing of oneself from bondage to the false self. It names, furthermore, a gradual, long-term process of transformation, a process within which discrete mystical experiences reach fruition and without which they are destined to fade into ineffectual memories.

By upsetting normal functioning, attentional work is bound to evoke eruptions from the unconscious. Recognition of unconscious contents and insight into their meaning, without, however, fascinated fixation upon them, is a necessary step in the process. A part of attentional work, then, is like the therapeutic process in depth psychology: its purpose is to reclaim and reintegrate parts of the unconscious for the self. But attentional work is unlike depth-psychological work in another, crucial respect. For while the contemplative recognizes the contents of the unconscious as belonging to the self, he or she simultaneously sees that self (or is exhorted by tradition to see it) objectively, remaining cognizant of the fact that attachment to it or identification with it will continue to prevent truth from disclosing itself in its fullness.

Ideally, then, long coursing in attentional exercises increases the mind's ability to conserve and rechannel energy, to spend less of it on the useless imaginative-emotive elaboration of desire and anxiety characteristic of ordinary mentation. Ideas, emotions, and images continue to arise autonomously in the mind, but the attentive mind, the emptying mind, is less easily caught up in spasmodic reactions to them, less easily yanked into the past or flung into the future by them. Emotions and impressions begin to be experienced in their "purity"; they "leave no tracks," as the Zen saying goes. Energy formerly spent in emotive reactions, ego defense, fantasy, and fear now becomes the very delight of present-centeredness and a reservoir of compassion. As the psychic habit patterns of the former person are deautomatized, new patterns are formed in alignment with his or her strengthening intention-toward-awakening. Deautomatizing attention and reconstitutive *intention* lead to a new reticulation of the predispositional structures of consciousness, to a new ecology of mind. By emptying the self of unconscious compulsions and reactive patterns built up over time by the self-project, the contemplative discovers a new life of receptivity, internal freedom, and clarity. Impartial observation of one's existential situation becomes increasingly acute. Intuition is awakened. Freed of the bonds of fear and desire, one begins to taste primordial, ontic freedom. Released into the present, one knows that intersection of time and eternity where reality is, where divinity dwells.

The Importance of Tradition. Having thus far focused on the nature and practice of contemplative attention, I have deliberately ignored the myriad contexts within which it may be practiced. Let me attempt to adjust the balance by a few concluding remarks on the importance of spiritual tradition.

First, it should be clear that the function of contemplative work is largely destructive. The accoutrements of a spiritual tradition provide a protective and constructive framework within which destructive work can proceed. The more seriously the foundations of the false self are undermined by the practice of attention, the fiercer become the storms of protest from within. The "dying" that occurs during contemplative work can cause internal shocks and reactions so profound that only the deep contours of a tradition can absorb them and turn them to creative effect. The support of a tradition hundreds of years old—rich in symbolism, metaphysical and psychological maps, and the accumulated experience of thousands of past wayfarers—and the guidance of an experienced teacher are indispensable. A "new age" movement that wishes to champion contemplative technique but jettison the traditional context in which it was originally lodged seems likely to be either very superficial or very dangerous or both.

Second, tradition stresses and a spiritual community supports, in a way that a mere technique cannot, the importance of morality as a *sine qua non* foundation and necessary ongoing accompaniment to the inner work. Without the rectification of external conduct, inner work cannot proceed far. One would be hard pressed to find a single exception to this rule in the great traditions.

Finally, human transformation is effected not solely by isolated bouts of intense attentional training; such training must be linked to ordinary life by an intentionality that makes every aspect of life a part of the spiritual work. The contemplative opus, in other words, is hardly limited to formal periods of attentional practice. Ordinary activity and formal contemplative practice must reinforce each other and between them sustain the continuity of practice that alone can awaken the mind and help it realize the *telos* adumbrated for it in the images and concepts of the tradition to which it belongs. And it is precisely the traditions' *teloi* that, by evoking the aspirant's intentionality, provide this continuity.

A spiritual *telos* evokes in the aspirant an overarching aim that fuses the activities of ordinary life and the periods of attentional practice into a continuous line, a "praying without ceasing." So fused, life becomes the "willing of one thing," a Kierkegaardian phrase for "purity of heart" or mature faith. Hubert Benoit calls this state of being "total attention," though a better rendering might be "attention to the totality." When attention is "total" one becomes increasingly aware not only of what one is doing but why one is doing it. One becomes increasingly able to grasp the universal context of one's smallest action, able to see the farthest object toward which one's action in this moment tends. When the in-

tention-toward-awakening becomes so pervasive, attention so "total," and willing so unified, the continuity of praxis leading to deep personal transformation is achieved. Attentional exercises, then, are hardly meant to be practiced in isolation. Their effectiveness requires not only long practice but also the support of a community, the guidance of tradition, the tranquillity effected by moral purification, and, finally, the continuity of practice that allows the power of will, indispensable to the transformative work, to be fully born.

[*See also* Meditation *and* Spiritual Discipline.]

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PHILIP NOVAK

ATTIS. *See* Dying and Rising Gods; *see also* Cybele.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD. [*This entry consists of three articles on the characteristics attributed to the divine being in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. For broad comparative discussion of divinity in the history of religions, see* Supreme Beings *and* Deity. *For further discussion of God in the scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam and in later thought, see* God.]

Jewish Concepts

Postbiblical Jewish teachers sensed no incongruity in attributing to God qualities having strong human associations; the rabbis of the Talmud and the Midrash rely on the biblical attributes by which, as they remark, God is called in place of his name. This reliance on biblical attributes should not be taken anachronistically to mean that God is only called just, compassionate, and the like, but that, in reality, his true nature cannot be known, since this kind of distinction between essence and attributes did not surface in Judaism until the more philosophically oriented Middle Ages. God is called by his attributes because he is so described in scripture, which, as God's revealed word, informs humans how God is to be thought about and addressed.

The Hebrew word *middah*, used by the rabbis, corresponds roughly to the word *attribute* and means quality or measure. The medieval distinction between God's attributes and his essence could have had no significance for the spontaneous nature of rabbinic thinking. The term *middot* (pl. of *middah*) denotes the proper limits by means of which each of his qualities finds its expression when required in particular circumstances. A good part of the rabbinic thinking on divine control of the universe consists of the subtle interplay between God's justice and his mercy. For God to overlook sinfulness and wickedness would be for him to betray his quality of justice. As a rabbinic saying has it: "Whoever declares that God is indulgent forfeits his very life" (B.T., *B.Q.*

50a). Yet God's justice is always tempered by mercy. He pardons sinners who return to him in sincere repentance and is ever ready to be entreated to exercise his compassion. God's mercy is extended to human beings who show mercy to one another. A typical rabbinic doctrine is that of measure for measure (*Soṭ.* 1.7–10). To the extent that man is prepared to go beyond the letter of the law to be excessively generous and forgiving, God can, with justice, be gracious; the more merciful a human being is in his conduct with his fellows, the more will God extend to him his sympathy and his pardon (B.T., *R. ha-Sh.* 17a).

The rabbis explore the biblical record, elaborating on the attributes found there. For the rabbis, the teaching that emerges from biblical statements about God is that he is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent, although these abstract terms are never used by the rabbis, who prefer the concrete language favored by the Bible. God is present at all times in the universe, which he fills. Yet reservations are implied about the language used when God's presence *(shekhinah)* in the universe is compared to the human soul filling the body it inhabits (B.T., *Ber.* 10a), with the clear implication that the pervasiveness is spiritual, not spatial. God knows all there is to be known, including all future events (B.T., *San.* 90b), although the idea of God's foreknowledge receives little prominence in rabbinic thought. As in the Bible, so for the rabbis, God possesses unlimited power, but here, too, the consideration of whether the doctrine of God's omnipotence embraces even contradiction had to wait until the rise of medieval theological speculation.

That God is one and eternal is as axiomatic for the rabbis as it is for the biblical authors upon whom they based their views. God is totally unaffected by the passage of time. Nevertheless, the Midrash (*Mekhilta'*, Beshalaḥ 4) can say that God appeared to the children of Israel at the crossing of the sea in the guise of a youthful warrior, whereas he appeared at Sinai as a venerable sage teaching the Torah to his disciples. In another Midrashic passage (*Ex. Rab.* 5.9) it is said that God's voice at Sinai adapted itself to the temperament and disposition of the individual recipients. God spoke to the young in youthful terms, to the older folk in more mature ways. Men heard the voice speaking in a form suitable to males, women in a form suitable to females. Implied here is the idea, later to be developed more fully, that a distinction is to be made between God as he is in himself and God as he becomes manifest in creation. The differentiation is said to have been only in the way in which the divine revelation had its effect. In God there is no trace of age or sex. God is unchanging and unlimited.

The rabbis do not, however, refuse to allow all attributes of the divine nature to be used. The rabbis, following literally the biblical accounts, seemingly believe that God possesses the attributes of goodness, justice, wisdom, truth, and holiness and that these are not simply metaphors, although God possesses these attributes in a manner infinitely greater than human beings can imagine; human beings can only approximate these attributes in very faint measure in their conduct. The divide between God and man is never crossed, but it is the duty of man to be godlike by trying to make the divine attributes his own insofar as this is possible (B. T., *Shab.* 133b). Man can and should be holy, but he can never be holy in the way that God is holy (*Lv. Rab.* 24.9). Man can pursue the truth and live a life of integrity, but even of Moses it is said that he failed to attain to the fiftieth and highest gate of understanding, that is, of perception of the divine (B.T., *Ned.* 38a). Man must be compassionate like his maker, but his compassion must not stray beyond its legitimate boundaries. If, for example, a man mourns beyond the period specified by the law when his relative has died, God is said to protest: "Cease from mourning. You are not more compassionate than I" (B.T., *Mo'ed Q.* 27b).

The change that came about in the Middle Ages, when a more systematic theological approach dominated the scene, resulted in a completely fresh examination of the whole question of divine attributes. In their quest for the most refined, abstract formulation, the medieval thinkers tended to speak of God as simple, pure, a complete unity, with neither division nor multiplicity. Their difficulty with the divine attributes found in the Bible and the rabbinic literature was not only because in these God is described in human terms. Even if the attributes could be explained as metaphors, there remained the implication that the realities the metaphors represented were coexistent with God for all eternity, seeming to suggest for many of the thinkers a belief in a plurality of divine beings. For the more thoroughgoing of the medieval thinkers, to ascribe attributes in any positive sense to God was to be guilty of idolatry.

Not all the medieval thinkers saw reason to qualify the older doctrine of attributes. Ḥasdai Crescas (1340–1410) refused to accept the notion that to say God is good or wise is to impose limits on his nature or to set up goodness and wisdom as rival deities. Maimonides (Mosheh ben Maimon, 1135/8–1204) and others, however, sensed the difficulties so keenly that they felt themselves obliged to develop the idea of negative attributes. For Maimonides, the attributes referring to God's essence (his unity, wisdom, and existence) are not to be understood as saying anything at all about God's true nature. All that they imply is the negation of their opposites. When God is said to exist, the meaning is that

he is not a mere fiction. When he is said to be wise, the meaning is that there is neither ignorance nor folly in him. When it is said that he is one, the meaning is that there is neither plurality nor multiplicity in his being, although the actual nature of that being is beyond all human comprehension, and of it no human language can be used. For Maimonides, the knowledge of God is a constant process of negation. The finite mind can never hope to grasp the divine nature, but the more one knows of what God is not the closer one comes to such perception. Secondary attributes, on the other hand, such as goodness, justice, and mercy, may be used of God even in a positive sense, since these do not refer to his essence but to his activity. Maimonides gives the illustration of God's care for the embryo in the womb. If such care were possible for a human being, we would attribute it to that person's compassionate nature, and in this sense we are permitted to say that God is compassionate.

The qabbalists, in their doctrine of Ein Sof ("the limitless," God as he is in himself) and the *sefirot* (the powers by means of which the godhead becomes manifest), tread a middle road on the question of attributes. The qabbalists, more radical here than the philosophers, do not allow even negative attributes to be used. But for God as he is expressed in the realm of the *sefirot*, even the positive attributes of essence are in order. God can be described positively as existing, as one and as wise, provided it is realized that the reference is to his manifestation in the *sefirot*.

The question of the divine attributes receives little attention in modern Jewish thought, there being a marked tendency to see the whole subject as somewhat irrelevant to living faith.

[*See also* Shekhinah; Qabbalah; Folk Religion, *article on* Folk Judaism; *and* God, *articles on* God in the Hebrew Scriptures *and* God in Postbiblical Judaism.]

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LOUIS JACOBS

Christian Concepts

In the tradition of Christian theology, an attribute of God is a perfection predicated of God in a formal, intrinsic, and necessary way as one of many defining characteristics. These perfections, first discovered as they are reflected in the created universe, are such that their objective concept can be disengaged from all their finite modes of realization, enabling them to be attributed to God as pure perfections within God. Such perfections are numerous and logically interconnected. One among them is given ontological priority as grounding all the others and is understood as the formal constituent of the divine nature; the others, derivative from it, are what are strictly called attributes. Historically, there have been many candidates for the former: goodness (Christian Platonism), being as act (Thomas Aquinas), infinity (Duns Scotus), radical intellection (John of Saint Thomas), omniperfection (nominalism), spirit as *Geist* (Hegel), radical liberty, love, and so forth.

The multiple formalities taken to be attributes are understood as characteristic of God in a way proper to himself, that is, one that transcends all finite modes in which any perfection is found realized in the cosmos. The formalities, as divine, remain unknowable in themselves. Thus, the "knowledge act" on which such predication is based is always analogical or symbolic in kind. This is clearest in the understanding that the many divine attributes are all really identical with divinity and so with each other, but that a formal distinguishing of them is demanded by the inadequacy of human thought in its finite mode of knowing God. Thus, the justice of God really is his mercy in the order of his own being, but both the formalities of justice and mercy are ascribed to him in the human finite order of knowing. The distinctions between the divine attributes, in other words, are distinctions of reason. It became customary to categorize these attributes in various ways, the most significant of which distinguishes entitative attributes from operative ones. The former characterize God in his very being (goodness, eternity, infinity, etc.); the latter characterize his necessary relationship to any world he might summon into being and are grasped by reason as the divine knowing and loving. These latter are attributes only insofar as they are necessarily in God. Thus, love is a divine attribute in that the Christian cannot conceive of God as nonloving, but the termination of that divine activity at this or that creaturely good is not an attribute but something freely chosen by God.

The doctrine concerning the divine attributes originated with the early church fathers and continued to develop, with its main architectonic lines unchanged, until the Enlightenment; it was not, for example, matter for dispute between the parties to the Reformation. Obviously, it is a theological construct rather than a direct matter of faith; that is to say, it is the product of reflection upon what God has revealed rather than the

immediate content of that revelation. The self-revelation of God articulated in both Old and New Testaments (i.e., the Jewish and the Christian scriptures) is not any metaphysical account of God's essence and its defining characteristics, but a narrative of God's saving history with first Israel, and then, through Jesus Christ, with the world at large. Thus, the Bible offers no doctrine of divine attributes but rather an account of the attitudes God has freely chosen to adopt toward his creatures, his free decisions in the events of revelation and saving grace. In this light, the traditional teaching on the divine attributes assumes something of the character of a natural theology, in the sense that such teaching is neither revealed in a direct or formal way nor immediately derived from what is so revealed, but rather results from rational reflection upon a presupposed concept of what constitutes God's inmost nature. But the illation from characteristic activity to underlying nature or essence is a valid one logically, that is, the manner in which God freely chooses to relate to his creatures is disclosive of what constitutes his nature and attributes. Thus, there is a natural theology operative in the doctrine on the attributes, but it is not one which serves as a criterion for interpreting the Bible. Rather, the very converse is true: the New Testament confession of God as revealed in Jesus the Christ controls any subsequent determination of the attributes of God postulated theologically.

Inherent in the theism wherein the above understanding of the attributes is developed is a strong emphasis on God's transcendence of the world, without any denial of his simultaneous immanence therein. From the time of Hegel and Schleiermacher (in the mid-nineteenth century), emphasis begins to shift to the immanence of God. Classical theism is now confronted with a pantheistic notion of God (in which the world is God's unfolding of himself), or a panentheistic one (in which God and world, without being identical, are correlates each necessary to the other). Insofar as this movement gains momentum, it undercuts the traditional doctrine on the attributes by focusing not only on what constitutes God absolutely, but equally on what constitutes him relatively, that is, insofar as he is determined contingently by creatures. This approach has been adopted notably by process theology, which finds its inspiration in the thought of Alfred Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne. Here, "becoming," rather than "being," is the ultimate category, and God is only partially described in terms of absolute attributes he cannot lack (divine nature as primordial); the full description includes also God's limited but actual determination of his own nature in his action upon and reaction to the world (divine nature as consequent). Differing from this but sharing

in some of its basic intuitions are various theologies following the modern stress upon subjectivity and self-consciousness. These tend to historicize the reality of God, viewing it more as event than as being: as the power of the future (Wolfhart Pannenberg), or the promise of a new future (Jürgen Moltmann). Here, the anthropomorphisms of the Old Testament especially are translated, not into a metaphysical scheme taken over from Greek rationalism, but into the categories of universal history. In such thought, the attributes of God are not done away with but are relativized historically—for example, God is no longer characterized as eternal but as infinitely temporal.

[*See also* God, *articles on* God in the New Testament *and* God in Postbiblical Christianity.]

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WILLIAM J. HILL, O.P.

Islamic Concepts

The word *ṣifah* ("attribute"; pl., *ṣifāt*) is not found in the Qur'ān, but the verbal noun *waṣf* does appear there one time (6:139) and the imperfect of the first form of the verb thirteen times in the sense of "to ascribe or uphold a description, to attribute, with the idea of falsehood." This meaning is associated with *Allāh* (God) in 6:100, 23:91, 37:159, 37:180, and 43:82; these verses seem to indicate that every description of God is bound to fail.

In order to avoid certain confusions, one must remember that the Arabic grammatical categories do not correspond to those of Western languages. Arab grammarians divided words (*kalimah*; pl., *kalām*) into three

categories: the verb *(fi'l)*, the *ism*, and the particle *(harf)*. But the term *ism* does not cover the term "noun" in Western grammar. In fact, the word *ism* includes, among other things, the *maṣdar* (verbal noun), the present and past participles, and the "attribute" *(al-ṣifah al-mushabbahah)*, which is the adjective or participle of adjectival value—a situation that could hardly fail to produce a certain variation in the use of the terms "attributes" and "divine names." To cite only one example, E. H. Palmer, in the introduction to his translation of the Qur'ān *(The Qur'ān Translated,* Oxford, 1900, p. lxvii), writes: "His attributes are expressed by ninety-nine epithets in the Qur'ān, which are single words, generally participial forms. . . . The attributes constitute the *asmā' al-ḥusnā,* the good names. . . ."

Theologians have worked hard to distinguish between the *ism* and the *ṣifah* by saying that the *ism* designates God insofar as he is qualified—for example, the Powerful or the Knowing—whereas the attribute is the entity in the essence of God that permits one to say that he is powerful or knowing—the Power, the Knowledge. In the course of the development of theology and following discussions among different schools, the *mutakallimūn* (scholastic theologians) refined the notion of the attribute by attempting to distinguish the various relations between the divine essence and the attributes. We shall encounter some of these distinctions below.

Early Creedal Statements. The first dogmatic creeds scarcely allude to the problem of the attributes. Historical conditions easily explain this absence: several years after the death of Muḥammad, the expansion of the new religion, with its political and social ramifications, led the heads of the community to express the essential traits of Islam and to condense them into a formula of faith easy to remember. Some of these formulas are found in the *ḥadīth* collections. Their common trait is the absence of any distinction between the ritual obligations and man's relationship to God. Little by little emerges the definition of the five pillars of Islam and then the formula of the Shahādah ("There is no god but God, and Muḥammad is the Messenger of God") by which the convert is integrated into the community. Already, in a way that was not philosophical but real, the unity of God was affirmed: God is one and he is unique. This was the point of departure for what would soon become the problem of the attributes in God.

Dissensions within the nascent Muslim community quickly gave rise to definite points of view, and those who did not accept them were anathematized. One of the first professions of faith, the eighth-century *Fiqh akbar I*, does not yet mention the unity of God, which is not questioned, nor for that matter does the *Waṣīyah* attributed to Abū Ḥanīfah (d. 767). However, with the *Fiqh akbar II*, the problem of the attributes begins; there one finds, in fact, affirmations such as these: God is one; he has no associates; nothing resembles him; God will be seen in heaven; God is "a thing" *(shay'),* without body, without substance, without accidents; God is the Creator before creating (art. 16); it is permissible to use Persian to designate the attributes of God except for the hand (art. 24); the proximity and distance of God are not material (art. 26); all the names of God are equal (art. 27); the Qur'ān is the word of God (art. 3). [*See also* Creeds, *article on* Islamic Creeds.]

Extremist Views: The Ḥashwīyah and the Ḥanābilah. The *ḥashwīyah,* the all too strict traditionalists, take literally the anthropomorphic passages of the Qur'ān, refusing any interpretation and taking refuge in the mystery of God, in whom the apparent contradictions are resolved.

In one passage of al-Juwaynī (d. 1037), reported by Ibn Asākir *(Tabyīn,* Damascus, 1928–1929, pp. 149ff.; cf. Gardet and Anawati, 1948, pp. 58–59), the author indicates the respective positions of the *ḥashwīyah,* the Muʿtazilah, and the Ashʿarīyah with regard to the principal points of doctrine. The *ḥashwīyah* sin through excess: for them the attributes of God are like human attributes. In heaven, God will be seen in the same way sensory things are seen; God is "infused" *(ḥulūl)* in the throne, which is his place; the hand and the face of God are real attributes like hearing and life: the hand is an actual body part; the face is a face in human form; the descent of God to the nearest heaven is a real descent. The eternal Qur'ān is the uncreated word of God, eternal, unchangeable; the individual letters, the ink with which it has been written, are created.

These extreme positions are also those of Ibn Ḥanbal and his disciples. His most important *ʿaqīdah,* or creed (translated by Henri Laoust in *La profession de foi d'Ibn Baṭṭa,* Damascus, 1958, p. 88, and by Allard as cited below), numbers no fewer than twelve pages. The problem of the divine attributes, which is to say, the ensemble of questions concerning God himself, is dealt with toward the end of the dogmatic exposition before the refutation of heretics. Briefly recalling the traditional cosmology, Ibn Ḥanbal continues:

> The throne of the Merciful is above the water, and God is on his throne. His feet rest upon the stool. God knows all that exists in the seven heavens and the seven earths, as well as all that exists between them. . . . He knows what is under the earth and at the bottom of the seas. The growth of trees and that of hair is known to him, as is that of every seed and every plant; he knows the place where each leaf falls. He knows the number of words and the number of pebbles, the number of grains of sand and grains of dust. He knows the weight of the mountains; he knows the actions of

human beings, their traces, their words, and their breaths; God knows everything. Nothing escapes him. God is on his throne high above the seventh heaven, behind the veils of lights, of shadows, of water, and of everything that he knows better than anyone.

If an innovator or heretic relies upon the words of God such as: "We are nearer to him than the jugular vein" (50:16); "He is with you wherever you are" (57:4); "Three men conspire not secretly together, but he is the fourth of them, neither five men, but he is the sixth of them, neither fewer than that, neither more, but he is with them, wherever they may be" (58:7); or if he bases himself on similarly ambiguous verses, one must say to him: What that signifies is knowledge, for God is on the throne above the seventh heaven and his knowledge embraces everything. God is separate from his creation, but no place escapes his knowledge.

The throne belongs to God, and the throne is supported by those who carry it. God is on the limitless throne. God is understanding without being able to doubt, seeing without being able to hesitate, knowing without being able not to know, generous without avarice, long-suffering without haste; he is mindful without forgetting; he is alert without negligence; he is near without anything escaping him; he is in movement, he speaks, he looks, he laughs, he rejoices, he loves and he detests, he displays ill-will and kindness; he becomes angry and he forgives; he impoverishes, gives or gives not. Every night he descends, in the manner he wishes, to the nearest heaven. "Like him there is naught; he is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing" (42:11).

The hearts of humankind are between two fingers of the Merciful: he turns them over as he desires and engraves on them whatever he wants. He created Adam with his hands and in his image. On the day of resurrection, the heavens and the earth will be in his palm; He will put his feet in the fire and he will disappear, and then he will make the people of the fire come out with his hand. The people of Paradise will look at his face and see it; God will honor them; he will manifest himself to them and give them gifts. On the day of resurrection, humankind will draw near to him and he will be in charge of the reckoning of their actions; he will not confide that to anyone else.

The Qur'ān is the word of God, that which he uttered; it is not created. He who claims that the Qur'ān is created is a Jahmī and an infidel. He who says that the Qur'ān is the word of God, but goes no further and does not say that it is uncreated, is of an opinion worse than the preceding one. He who claims that our pronunciation of the Qur'ān and our recitation are created, whereas the Qur'ān is the Word of God, is a Jahmī. And he who does not treat all of those people as infidels is like them. (Qādī Abū al-Ḥusayn, *Ṭabaqāt al-ḥanābilah*, Cairo, 1952, vol. 1, p. 29; trans. Allard, 1965, pp. 99–100)

The Muʿtazilah. The first essential thesis of the Muʿtazilah concerns the unity of God and thus the problem of the attributes and their relationship with the essence of God. It is the most important thesis of their doctrine, for it is the source of the others and has served to characterize the Muʿtazilah themselves: *ahl al-ʿadl wa-al-tawḥīd* ("the partisans of justice and unity").

We have already seen that the Qur'ān contains verses describing God in an anthropomorphic manner (6:52, 7:52, 55:27). There are others that insist on the differences between God and all that is created: "Like him there is naught" (42:11, 6:103). The first generations, mostly fideists, had accepted both groups of verses, taking refuge, by way of reconciling them, in the mystery of God and refusing to give any explanations. Contrary to the "corporealists" "whose extreme views we have seen, they were content to say that God had a hand, ears, and face, but not like ours" (see al-Bājūrī, *Ḥāshiyah . . . ʿalā Jawharat al-tawḥīd*, Cairo, 1934, p. 76, and the satirical verse of Zamakhsharī, the Muʿtazilī).

The Muʿtazilah were radical: in their view, the *via remotionis*, or *tanzīh*, was to be applied in all of its rigor. The Qur'ān itself invites us to do so: in regard to God one must reject all that is created. The anthropomorphic verses? They will be "interpreted" symbolically; if necessary, they will be denied. Similarly, *ḥadīth* that go the wrong way will be rejected. It is necessary to maintain, at whatever cost, the absolute divine unity, strict monotheism. Against the anthropomorphisms of "the people of the *ḥadīth*" and the ʿAlids, they affirmed their agnosticism in regard to the nature of God (see their creed as reported by al-Ashʿarī in his *Maqālāt al-Islāmīyīn*, ed. Ritter, Istanbul, 1929, p. 155). Without going as far as the Jahmīyah, who completely denied the attributes of God, they affirmed that all these attributes were identical with the essence, that they had no real existence. Against the Dahrīyah (materialists), they affirmed a personal creator God.

Likewise, if God is absolutely spiritual, he cannot be seen by the senses; hence the negation of the "vision of God" in the future life, the *ruʾyah* of the traditionalists (see al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, Cairo, 1907, bk. 8, pp. 115ff.). The absolute transcendence of God in relation to the world leads them to distinguish rigorously between the preeternal (*qadīm*) and that which has begun to be (*muḥdath*) and makes them reject energetically all notion of *ḥulūl* (the infusion of the divine in the created).

The affirmation of a God distinct from the world poses the problem of the relations of God with this world. The Muʿtazilah ask themselves if God's knowledge of things precedes them in existence or is born with them; on the whole they conclude in favor of a "contingent" or "created" divine knowledge of free future things and of the possible in general (see al-Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt*, p. 222 and passim, and al-Khayyāṭ, *Kitāb al-intiṣār*, ed. Nyberg, Cairo, 1925, p. 126). They study the

object, the limits of divine power; they analyze man's power over actions and affirm that he creates them by "generation" (*tawallud;* on which, see Aḥmad Amīn, *Duḥā,* vol. 3, p. 59; and Ibn Ḥazm, *Fiṣal,* vol. 5, Cairo, 1899/1900, p. 52).

Finally, always with the same concern to suppress every shadow of associationism, they affirmed the *created* character of the Qurʾān, the word of God. In the history of the Muʿtazilah, this thesis has drawn the greatest attention because of its political repercussions. The reasoning of the Muʿtazilah was very simple: God, identical with his attributes, admits of no change; it is thus impossible that the Qurʾān, the word of God in the sense of an attribute, is uncreated, for it is essentially multiple and temporal. The Muʿtazilah did not fail to find texts in the sacred book itself to support their thesis. They concluded that the Qurʾān is a "genre" of words, created by God; it is called "the word of God" because, contrary to our own words, the Qurʾān was created directly.

In his *Lawāmiʿ al-bayyināt fī al-asmāʾ wa-al-ṣifāt* (Cairo, 1914, pp. 24ff.), Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1209) expounds the different groupings of the attributes in accordance with the schools. He sets forth those of the Muʿtazilah in the following manner: For Abū Hāshim, the attributes are "modes" (*aḥwāl*), intermediate entities between the existent and the nonexistent. What ensures the reality of these modes is either (1) the divine essence, whether initially (*ibtidāʾan*) or by the intermediary of other modes, for in all this it is a matter of essential attributes; or else it is (2) the *maʿānī* found in the divine essence, in which case it is a matter of entitative attributes or of qualification (*maʿnawīyah*), such as *ʿālim* ("knowing") or *qādir* ("able"). As for operative attributes, they do not constitute a stable state (*ḥālah thābitah*) of the divine essence, nor of the *maʿānī*, but they are made up of the pure emanation of effects starting from God. [*See* Muʿtazilah.]

Al-Ashʿarī. It was left to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī (d. 935), a deserter from the Muʿtazilah, to give to it the hardest and one might say the most decisive blows. The doctrine he elaborated would become that of orthodox Islam itself.

A native of Basra, he was for forty years the disciple and then the collaborator of al-Jubbāʾī, the chief of the Muʿtazilah in that city, until one day, suddenly made aware of the dangers that the Muʿtazilah were bringing to Islam, he was "converted" to the true doctrine. He broke publicly with them and consecrated the rest of his life to the refutation of their doctrine.

But at the same time that he attacked his former companions, he took care to put himself in the good graces of the fervent traditionalists, the Ḥanbalī zealots.

Their inquisitorial attitude was allied—among the most exalted of them, the *ḥashwīyah*—with a materialization of doctrine that did not fail to disquiet the intelligent believers. And it was precisely to fend off their misdeeds that al-Ashʿarī, upon arriving in Baghdad, decided to write his *Ibānah,* or "elucidation" of the principles of religion. In an apostolic *captatio benevolentiae,* he expressed his admiration for Ibn Ḥanbal out of a desire to show the latter's disciples that one could be a good Muslim without falling into the exaggerations of literalism.

What was al-Ashʿarī's method, and on what bases did this doctor, only yesterday a fervent Muʿtazilī, ardent promoter of reasoning, construct his "defense of dogma"? First of all, regarding exegesis of the Qurʾān, he thrust aside the much too drastic *tanzīh* of the Muʿtazilah, which led to *taʿṭīl*, the total stripping away of the notion of God (*Ibānah,* Cairo, 1929/30, p. 46; Ibn Ḥazm, *Fiṣal,* vol. 2, pp. 122–126). He had in mind to keep himself within a literal interpretation of the text and thus clearly seems to present himself as a faithful disciple of Ibn Ḥanbal. One should not be too surprised that the creed opening the short treatise of the *Ibānah* explicitly refers to the severe imam, covering him with eulogies. This is a literalism peculiar to al-Ashʿarī, for the later Ashʿarīyah were to move away noticeably from the rigid literalism of their founder and thereby draw upon themselves the fire of an Ibn Ḥazm and of the Ḥanābilah themselves (Henri Laoust, *Essai sur . . . Takī-d-Dīn Aḥmad B. Taimīya,* pp. 81–82). Likewise, on the question of "the vision of God," on that of anthropomorphic expressions and attributes (*Ibānah,* p. 45), he entertains opinions that Ibn Ḥanbal would have subscribed to without fear.

That is the al-Ashʿarī of our direct sources, but there is another one: the figure whom his disciples have in mind. For al-Juwaynī (eleventh century), who would become al-Ghazālī's teacher, al-Ashʿarī is not a theologian who rallied to the opinions of Ibn Ḥanbal but a reconciler of two extreme positions. We have a clear testimony in the long extract from al-Juwaynī that Ibn ʿAsākir gives us in his *Tabyīn* (pp. 149ff.). The famous judge shows how his master, in the principal questions, has followed a middle way between the exaggerations of the Muʿtazilah and those of the *ḥashwīyah* who, in truth, were recruited among the Ḥanbalī extremists (see Gardet and Anawati, 1948, pp. 58–59).

Al-Ashʿarī was not the only one to fight the good fight for the triumph of traditional doctrine. One of his contemporaries, al-Māturīdī, propagated in the eastern provinces of the empire the ideas that the author of the *Ibānah* fought for in Baghdad. After epic struggles against the old conservatives on the one hand and the

Mu'tazilah on the other, Ash'arism ended up in triumph. It won its case definitively when the famous Seljuk minister Niẓām al-Mulk created chairs for the new theological doctrine in the schools he founded at Nishapur and Baghdad.

This triumph was marked by the successive development of doctrine; three names indicate the principal stages: the *qāḍī* al-Bāqillānī (d. 1013), al-Juwaynī (Imām al-Ḥaramayn, d. 1085), and finally al-Ghazālī (d. 1111). [*See also* Ash'arīyah.]

Al-Bāqillānī. Among al-Bāqillānī's numerous works, it is in his *Kitāb al-tamhīd* that we find the most information on the problem of the attributes and the divine names. He deals with it especially in the chapter on *tawḥīd*, written explicitly against the Mu'tazilah, "for they all affirm that God has no life, no knowledge, no power, no hearing, no vision" (ed. R. C. McCarthy, Beirut, 1957, p. 252).

At the beginning of his treatise, al-Bāqillānī speaks only of the active participles such as *'ālim* ("knowing"), *qādir* ("able"), and *ḥayy* ("living"), whereas in the chapter on the attributes he seems to affirm that only the substantives employed in language about God designate attributes properly speaking.

In the chapter on the name and the named *(al-ism wa-al-musammā)*, a distinction is made between the *names* of God, encompassing all the active participles, and the divine attributes, which are substantives characterizing the essence of God or his action. The attribute is of two sorts: that of essence or that of action. From the divine names one deduces logically the existence of the attributes. To what degree are they really existent in God? To respond in precise fashion to this question, he distinguishes two series of terms: *waṣf* ("description"), *ṣifah* ("attribute"), and *mawṣūf* ("described"), on the one hand, and *tasmiyah* ("nomination"), *ism* ("name"), and *musammā* ("named"), on the other. He defines the attribute *(ṣifah)* as "the thing found in the being described [*mawṣūf*] or belonging to it; that which makes this thing something acquired is the act of description [*waṣf*], which is the quality [*na't*] deriving from the attribute [*ṣifah*]" (p. 213). Much later he will say: "The act of describing is the speech of the person who describes God or someone else as 'being,' 'knowing,' 'living,' 'able,' giving favor and kindness. This act of describing is speech that is heard and its expression; it is different from the attribute subsisting in God and the existence of which entails that God is knowing, able, willing" (p. 214).

In a parallel way al-Bāqillānī gives the following precise details: "The doctrine of the partisans of the truth is that the name [*ism*] is the named [*musammā*] itself,

or an attribute tied to it, and that it is other than the fact of giving a name [*tasmiyah*]" (p. 227).

Thus, to explain the realism of the divine names and attributes, al-Bāqillānī distinguishes between the plane of language and that of reality. "Language affects the reality of the speaker, but the moment that speech [name or attribute] is uttered, it refers only to the one spoken of" (Allard). This distinction presupposes a theory of the divine origin of language that allows humans to enter into reality directly, as it is.

In the chapter dealing with name and denomination, al-Bāqillānī gives a classification of the names and attributes, which can be summarized as follows (p. 235, 5-15; Allard, 1965, p. 308):

1. Names that express the named—for example, "thing" *(shay')*, "existent" *(mawjūd)*;
2. Names that express that the named is different from the rest—for example, "other" *(ghayr)*, "different" *(khilāf)*;
3. Names that express an attribute of the named, an attribute that is the form, the composite; an attribute that is an exterior aspect; an attribute that is found in the being itself; an attribute that is an action of this being; an attribute that is not an action.

On the question of the anthropomorphism of the Qur'ān, al-Bāqillānī remains very close to al-Ash'arī: he affirms that God really has a face, and hands, that he is really on his throne. He refuses to interpret these expressions either in a realistic fashion (like the Ḥanābilah) or in an allegorical fashion (like the Mu'tazilah). Similarly, for the "vision of God" (pp. 266–279), al-Bāqillānī insists on God's transcendence: there is no possible explanation for the way that vision will take place any more than there is for the way that divine speech is to be understood.

Al-Juwaynī. With al-Juwaynī (d. 1085), a distinction among the divine attributes was made with reference to the notions of the necessary, the possible, and the impossible. In his treatise *Al-irshād*, which became a classic of *kalām*, after an introduction consecrated to the study of the character of reasoning and its nature, the author deals with *tawḥīd:* he proves the existence of God, in particular by the contingency of the world and *a novitate mundi;* then he establishes two large categories: (1) what exists necessarily in God—the attributes, and (2) what is possible—in which he deals with the visibility of God, the creation of human acts, justification and reprobation, prophetology, eschatology, and the imamate.

As regards the attributes, al-Ash'arī spoke of *bi-lā kayf* (lit., "without how"): affirmation of the existence of the

attributes while refusing to ask about their mode *(kayf)* so as to safeguard, at one and the same time, the divine transcendence and the explicit assertions of the Qur'ān. Al-Juwaynī goes further: he divides the attributes into *nafsī* ("essential") and *ma'nawī* (of quality, or "entitative" [Allard]). The "essential" attribute is every positive attribute of the subject that resides in the subject so long as it lasts and that does not come from a cause. The qualitative attribute comes from a cause that exists in the subject *(Irshād, ed. and trans. Jean Dominique Luciani, Paris, 1938, pp. 17–18; trans. p. 39). Next al-Juwaynī sets down the different attributes of God: existence, eternity, subsistence, dissimilarity to all things—in particular the absence of extent, hence the obligation to interpret allegorically those passages of the Qur'ān that presuppose extent.

Then al-Juwaynī affirms that God is not a substance *(jawhar)*, which implies extent, and thus he refutes the Christian doctrines on the Trinity. After that he shows the unicity of God by the argument of "the natural obstacle": if there were two gods, their wills could be discordant. Finally, the seventh chapter is dedicated to the qualitative attributes: God is powerful; he is willing, living, and so forth.

Contrary to most of the *mutakallimūn*, he preserves the system of the "modes" *(aḥwāl)*, which in his opinion resolves the rather delicate problem of the relations of the essence of God with the attributes, the mode being an attribute attached to an existing thing but which is qualified neither by existence nor by nonexistence (pp. 47–48/81–83).

To know the divine attributes we cannot but start with that which is known to us: the invisible can only be known by starting with the visible. The bonds that unite the two are of four kinds: the law of cause (to be knowledgeable in the visible world is a result of knowledge), the law of condition (to be knowledgeable presupposes that one is alive), the law of essence (the essence of the knowing person is to have knowledge), and finally the law of proof (the action of creating proves the existence of the Creator, p. 49/83–84).

Al-Ghazālī. Of the works of the great theologian al-Ghazālī, I shall confine myself here to only two: the *Iqtiṣād fī al-i'tiqād* (The Just Mean in Belief) and *Al-maqṣad al-aqṣā: Sharḥ asmā' Allāh al-ḥusnā* (The Further Goal: Commentary on the Most Beautiful Names of God).

In the first book, al-Ghazālī devotes the first four chapters to establishing the nature of *kalām*, its social function, its method, and the category of people it addresses. Then he divides the ensemble of the questions envisaged into four main parts, expressed precisely: since God is the object of *kalām*, one should first of all

study him in his essence (first part), then in his attributes (second part); one then should consider God's action, that of his personal acts (third part) and those of his envoys (fourth part). The whole of the work may be summarized as follows:

> *Preliminaries.* The nature of *kalām;* its importance; its methodology.

I. *The Divine Essence.* (1) God exists. (2) He is eternal. (3) He is permanent. (4) He is insubstantial. (5) He is incorporeal. (6) He is nonaccidental. (7) He is undefined. (8) He is not localized. (9) He is visible and knowable. (10) He is one.

II. *The Attributes of God.* (1) The attributes in themselves: life, knowledge, power, will, hearing, sight, speech. (2) The "status" of the attributes: (a) they are not the essence; (b) they are in the essence; (c) they are eternal; (d) the divine names.

III. *The Acts of God* (what God can or cannot do). (1) God can choose (is free) to impose no obligation on his creatures. (2) Or he can choose to impose on them what they cannot do. (3) God does nothing in vain. (4) He can make innocent animals suffer. (5) He can fail to reward one who obeys him. (6) The obligation of knowing God comes from revelation alone. (7) The sending of prophets is possible.

IV. *The Envoys of God.* (1) Muḥammad. (2) Eschatology (and faith). (3) The caliphate. (4) The sects.

The *Maqṣad al-aqṣā* is a small treatise numbering about a hundred pages in the Cairo edition (n.d.), on the attributes and the divine names. A long introduction contains an analysis of the nature of the name and its relations with the named, along with its meaning in reality and in the spirit. Al-Ghazālī distinguishes among the different categories of names—univocal, synonymous, equivocal—and shows how the pious man finds his happiness in this world in attempting to pattern his life on the "divine morality" expressed by the attributes and the names. In the second part, a more or less lengthy account is given to each of the ninety-nine names of God.

(For the development of the doctrine of the divine attributes and the place it occupies in the later theological treatises of al-Shahrastānī, al-Rāzī, al-Baydāwī, al-Ījī, al-Jurjānī, al-Sanūsī, and, for the contemporary period, al-Laqānī, al-Bājūrī, and Muḥammad 'Abduh, see Gardet and Anawati, 1948, pp. 160–174.)

The Falāsifah. In the wake of Aristotelian and Neoplatonic philosophy, al-Fārābī (d. 950) and Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna; d. 1037) elaborated a metaphysical notion of God that attempted to return to the Qur'anic data. For al-Fārābī as for Ibn Sīnā God is the necessary Being as

such; in him essence and existence are identical; he is without cause and the cause of everything; he belongs to no genus nor to any species; he has no contrary in any respect; nothing resembles him. He is the Truth, the pure Good, the pure Intelligence; he is generous; he is life; he is blissful. He knows because he knows himself, and so forth.

But what becomes of the divine attributes in this conception, and what degree of reality do they have outside of the divine essence? In referring more or less explicitly to Aristotelian principles, al-Fārābī, and after him Ibn Sīnā, consider the attributes as properties of the essence, but expressed negatively. The principle is as follows: Certain terms, although applied to creatures, can also be applied to God, but only by taking into account the manner in which one would make the attribution. Insofar as they are applied to creatures, they are accidents of different kinds, but, applied to God, they should be considered properties expressing only action. Moreover, terms that, when applied to created things, are positive in both their form and signification, when applied to God have a negative sense while retaining their positive form. Al-Fārābī would say of the divine attributes, for example, that they fall into two groups: (1) those that designate what belongs to God by virtue of himself and (2) those that designate what has a relation to something else outside of him, that in fact designate an action. As examples of the latter, al-Fārābī mentions justice (al-ʿadl) and generosity (al-jūd); as an example of the former, he would say that God is not wise through wisdom that he would have acquired by knowledge of something outside his essence, but rather it is in his own essence that he finds this knowledge. In other words, the nonrelational predicates, such as wisdom, are affirmed of God as if belonging to him in a negative sense: the qualities they express were not acquired from something external to his essence.

In the same manner, Ibn Sīnā explains that the attributes are properties that reveal not the essence of God, but only his existence. Even then they only reveal it in describing the actions of God or his dissimilarity to other things. So much so is this the case that even when the predicates are adjectives of positive form one must interpret them as signifying actions or negations.

One can understand that, under these conditions, al-Ghazālī had a good chance to show that the falāsifah (he had in mind al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā above all) were practically denying the reality of the distinction between the essence and the attributes; see his exposition of the doctrine of the falāsifah on this point and his criticism in Tahāfut al-falāsifah (The Incoherence of the Philosophers).

With certain reservations, Ibn Rushd (Averroës)

adopted Ibn Sīnā's position on the divine attributes and attempted to refute al-Ghazālī's attacks in his Tahāfut Al-tahāfut (The Incoherence of [al-Ghazālī's] Incoherence).

In conclusion one may say that, from early times down to the present, the divine attributes and names have played an important role in Muslim piety among the educated and the common people alike. The faithful need to address themselves to God, to a living God, and they can only reach him through those descriptions that the Qurʾān has offered, precisely in order to make him accessible to those who invoke him. The Muslim prayer beads (subḥah) serve to remind those who hold them while reciting the "most beautiful names of God" that their creator is among them and that he is enveloping them in his protection and mercy. It is no exaggeration to say that the quintessence of Muslim piety finds its best sustenance in this fervent meditation on the attributes and the divine names.

[See also the biographies of the principal scholars mentioned herein.]

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GEORGES C. ANAWATI
Translated from French by Mary Ann Danner

ATUM was the creator god of Heliopolis, the sole progenitor and head of the ancient Egyptian pantheon according to one of the earliest Egyptian cosmogonies. Atum, "the all" or "the complete one," by spitting, vomiting, or masturbating produced Shu and Tefnut, "air" and "moisture," who in turn generated Geb and Nut, "earth" and "sky." This last chthonic pair produced Osiris and Seth, rivals for the rulership of the land, together with their consorts, Isis and Nephthys. Together these nine deities comprised the great Heliopolitan ennead, but probably the greatest function of this pantheon was to provide a genealogy for the Egyptian king, who was equated with Horus, the son of Isis. Horus had to avenge the slaying of his father, Osiris, by his uncle, Seth.

As early as the Old Kingdom (2686–2181 BCE) the sky god, Atum, had been assimilated to the sun god, Re. This new solar deity, Re-Atum, gained or regained a commanding position at the head of the Egyptian pantheon and contributed to some weakening in the myth of divine kingship by clearly subordinating the king to the god by the fifth dynasty. However, the Horus-king was accommodated to the new solar cult by being titled also "Son of Re." At some point the creator god, Atum, was subordinated to Ptah, at least by Memphite priests who described Atum's creation by Ptah as recorded on the Shabaka Stone.

The great temple of Heliopolis, one of the three largest in Egypt, has not survived, and very few finds have been made in its vicinity. The vast amount of religious literature whose origin was Heliopolitan was primarily solar-oriented and had Re as principal god, but the sources are from the fifth dynasty and later. In the solar religion Atum was retained as the old, setting sun, and Khepri was the young, rising sun, but Re was the bright noonday sun. It is probably impossible to estimate the earlier importance of Atum or of the later revivals that may have reawakened interest in this primordial god. The late *Contendings of Horus and Seth* presents Atum

as one of the chief judges before whom most of the other senior deities testify on behalf of Horus, while Seth appears to have had the support of the supreme god Re.

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LEONARD H. LESKO

AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY (d. 604/5), leader of the first evangelistic mission to the Saxon peoples in southeastern England and first archbishop of Canterbury. Pope Gregory the Great (590–604) had conceived a mission to evangelize the Anglo-Saxons and in 596 chose Augustine, prior of Saint Andrew's monastery in Rome, to lead the expedition. With forty monks and letters of recommendation from Gregory addressed to Catholic leaders across Gaul, Augustine embarked. Within the year he reached the town now called Canterbury, which was the headquarters of the Saxon king Ethelbert (Æthelberht). Augustine was received with surprising hospitality, probably because Ethelbert had married a Christian, Bertha, the daughter of the Frankish king. Ethelbert gave Augustine lodging, land on which the mission could support itself, and freedom to preach and teach. Although Augustine and his men spoke only Latin and had to use interpreters, their message and manner of life were evidently winsome. Within a year several thousand people had requested baptism. Soon after, Augustine crossed the channel to Arles and was consecrated a bishop. Shortly after his return to Canterbury, he baptized Ethelbert, and this act set the stage for a wider Christian influence among the Saxons. In 601, Gregory appointed Augustine archbishop and sent additional helpers with instructions for him to establish his cathedral in the old Roman trade center to the northwest, called Londinium (London), and to appoint twelve suffragan bishops for the area. Augustine chose Canterbury as more feasible, but he did establish a bishop in London and one in Duro Brevis (modern-day Rochester), twenty-four miles west of Canterbury.

Far to the west of Canterbury existed another group of Christians among the Celtic people. According to optimistic instructions from the pope, "all the bishops of Britain" were to be under Augustine's care, a message that revealed Rome to be largely ignorant of the old Celtic church, which the Saxons had driven out of central England. Their church calendar, pastoral organization, and monastic procedures were different from those of Rome. In 604, Augustine arranged a meeting with

some of its bishops and sought to harmonize the two groups' differences. The distinctions between the two, however, and the Celts' fear of the Saxons, formed a chasm that seemed unbridgeable. Although unable to unify the church in his day, Augustine contributed to the unity that would come sixty years later.

Limited also was the extent of Augustine's evangelization, but he did bring to Canterbury the Italian monastic tradition, as it was beginning to be modified by the rule of Benedict of Nursia. This monastic practice of daily rounds of worship, meditation, farm work, preaching, works of mercy, and operation of a school for the sons of the leading families of the area was to become an influential instrument in the conversion of England. Augustine died 26 May 604 or 605 and was buried in Canterbury. He left no writings and established only the three dioceses in the southeast, but he laid foundations for the christianization of Anglo-Saxon England.

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H. McKennie Goodpasture

AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO (354–430), Christian theologian and bishop. A creative genius of mystical piety and great philosophical acumen, Augustine wrought a theological-ecclesiological system in which biblical tradition and classical philosophy coalesced. Not only was his thought seminal for the development of Western Christianity, his moral values and personal piety remained norms for medieval and Reformation Europe.

Augustine's life spanned a crucial epoch in state and church. The late Roman empire was disintegrating, and its collapse would devastate the public sense of political stability and continuity. The Christian church, having weathered persecution, moved into a period of doctrinal and ecclesiastical formation. Punic Africa had no small part in these political and religious affairs, and Augustine's self-proclaimed identity as "an African, writing for Africans . . . living in Africa" (*Letters* 17.2) must not be overlooked. Indeed, the manner in which Augustine united, in his works and in his person, the various currents of his time has definitely marked Western culture.

Early Life. Augustine, known also as Aurelius Augustinus, was born in Tagaste (present-day Souk-Ahras, Algeria) to a pagan father, Patricius, and a Christian mother, Monica. Monica's influence on Augustine was tremendous. He was convinced that her prayers, piety, and relentless pursuit of his conversion were instrumental in bringing about his life-altering encounter with God. Monica forbade Augustine's receiving infant baptism, but he was given the rite of the cross on the forehead and cleansing salt on the lips.

After early study under local schoolmasters, Augustine was sent, at fifteen, to Madaurus to continue his education. There began a period of profligacy that was to continue when he went to Carthage for advanced study. In that city, he took a concubine and fathered a son, Adeodatus, meaning "gift of God," to whom Augustine referred as "child of my sin." In Carthage, Augustine's education centered primarily on his becoming a rhetorician and lawyer—a field in which he became highly proficient. In later years, according to Philip Schaff, he "enriched Latin literature with a store of beautiful, original, and pregnant proverbial sayings" (*History of the Christian Church*, vol. 3, Grand Rapids, 1950, p. 998).

At this time, Augustine became enamored of Manichaeism, a sect that emphasized an essential dualism of good and evil. [*See* Manichaeism.] Manichaean stress on the evil nature of flesh had far reaching influence on Augustine. The impact of the Manichaean view of sex in his later formulation of the concept of the basic sinfulness of humankind and the weakness of the flesh has not been fully recognized.

In 373, Augustine came upon Cicero's now lost *Hortensius*. This work "inflamed" Augustine with a love of philosophy that continued for a lifetime. Induced by Monica's incessant pleading, prayers, and vivid dreams, Augustine turned to the Christian scriptures, but was gravely disappointed. In comparison to "the stately prose of Cicero," the Bible seemed unworthy. He found sections of *Genesis* crude; he questioned the integrity of certain Old Testament figures. It was philosophy that captured his intellectual curiosity. He proceeded with study of Aristotle's book on the categories.

Augustine returned to Tagaste, where he began teaching rhetoric. Patricius had died, having embraced the catholic church at Monica's insistence. Monica refused her son entrance to her home because he had espoused Manichaeism. She continued to pray and was told by a bishop, "It cannot be that the son of these tears should be lost" (*Confessions* 3.12).

In 380, Augustine completed his first book, *De pulchro et apto* (Beauty and Proportion), a work on aesthetics no longer extant. At this time, he gathered about him a

group of students who became his intimate friends. Among these were Alypius and Nebridius, who, like Augustine himself, would become priests and bishops in the African church.

Bitter sorrow at the death of a childhood friend prompted Augustine's return to Carthage. There he became interested in the Skeptics (the New Academy) and less enchanted with Manichaeism. [See Skeptics and Skepticism.] A long anticipated dialogue with the celebrated Faustus, Manichaen bishop of Milevis, proved to be utterly disappointing to Augustine. Thus began his disillusionment with and gradual separation from the sect, which he increasingly detested and later acrimoniously attacked.

Unruly students in Carthage occasioned Augustine's decision to leave for Rome, but once there illness overtook him. Upon his recovery he began teaching rhetoric. The position of public orator opened in Milan—where the imperial court frequently resided, and with the aid of friends and associates he secured this important position.

In Milan, Augustine came to know the respected Ambrose (c. 339–397), the patrician bishop of Milan. The latter's skill as rhetorician was legendary, and it was professional interest that drew Augustine to him initially. Ambrose's allegorical interpretation of the Bible gave Augustine a new understanding and appreciation of scripture. Stoic ethics—in which Ambrose was an expert—likewise had lasting effect. Augustine was also fascinated by the use of music—chanting and hymns—in Ambrose's church.

Augustine was soon joined by Monica, several cousins, his brother, students, and his mistress and son. Thus surrounded by a congenial African phalanstery, Augustine and his associates were introduced to Plato via the teachings of Plotinus (205–270). [See Neoplatonism and the biography of Plotinus.] Ambrose was well informed on Plotinus and quoted at length Plotinus's mystical interpretation of Platonic idealism. What clearly appealed most to Augustine was the possibility of combining Platonism with Christian cosmology. Augustine saw the Platonic conception of God—the One as the absolute, the all perfect, from whom emanates the nous (intelligence)—as a key to understanding the "God who was in Christ."

From this beginning Augustine delved deeper into Platonism, reading Plato in Latin translations. In Plato, Augustine found answers to questions on the origin and meaning of evil that had first drawn him to the sect of Mani. Later in his life, Augustine transformed Plato into a near-Christian, combining the Logos doctrine with Platonic idealism, the Gospel of John with the writings of Plotinus—in short, reconciling Greek wisdom with

Hebrew-Christian faith. A Platonic metaphysics was the result: the absolute Good as center of all reality, transcending thought and concrete being.

Very likely in pursuit of greater wealth and higher position in the society of Milan, it was decided that Augustine's mistress be dismissed and a marriage with a Milanese heiress arranged. This separation was painful to Augustine, but, nonetheless, unable to restrain his sexual desires while waiting for his intended bride, he took another mistress. He was deeply tormented by these conflicts between his actions and ideals. He had been reading the Bible regularly, listening to Ambrose, and discussing with friends the lives of those converted by scriptures. The number who had subsequently realized the need for celibacy particularly struck him.

Events converged during August of 386. The stern ethical demands of Ambrose's preaching joined with Monica's unending pleading that Augustine become a Christian. These, along with an increasing sense of the Platonic idea of personal integrity, were linked with the message of the apostle Paul.

A crisis was at hand. "I was frantic, overcome by violent anger with myself for not accepting your will and entering into your covenant" (*Confessions* 8.8). Suddenly, as he stood in the garden, he heard the voice of a child chanting "Tolle lege" ("Take it and read"). Taking up the Bible, he read the first passage to strike his eye, *Romans* 13:13–14: "not in revelling and drunkenness, not in lust and wantoness, not in quarrels and rivalries. Rather, arm yourselves with the Lord, Jesus Christ; spend no more thought on nature and nature's appetites." Augustine underwent a dramatic conversion, a profound life-transforming experience wherein sexual, willful, and spiritual wrestling resulted in complete surrender to God.

Augustine the Christian. Marriage plans were dismissed, and Augustine now aimed to become a Christian philosopher. To that end he took his coterie of friends and students, together with Adeodatus and Monica, to Cassiciacum, a country estate north of Milan. Here he engaged in leisurely debate and writing. Works of this period, such as *De beata vita* (On the Happy Life) and *De ordine* (On Order), show Augustine's transition from philosophy toward theology.

In Milan at Easter of 387, along with Adeodatus and Alypius, Augustine was baptized by Ambrose. The decision was then made to go back to Africa, and the family journeyed to Ostia, planning to take a ship for Carthage. At Ostia, Augustine and Monica experienced in their discussions of eternal wisdom moments of towering mystical exaltation. Shortly thereafter, in Ostia, Monica died.

Returning to Rome, Augustine immersed himself in

writing. His *De immortalitate animae* (On the Immortality of the Soul) and *De quantitate animae* (On the Greatness of the Soul) clearly reveal a philosopher who is incorporating a new biblically oriented theology into his understanding of the Christian faith.

Once more in his native Africa, Augustine established a lay retreat, a monastery, for philosophical contemplation, based at his small estate at Tagaste. He and his friends aimed to be servants of God. Here he composed *De vera religione* (On True Religion), which takes the Trinity as the foundation for true religion, a theme central to the majority of his works, and sees in Christianity the consummation of Plato's teaching.

At this time, Augustine had no thought of becoming a priest and carefully avoided those towns where priests were needed, but a chance visit to Hippo Regius (present-day Annaba, Algeria) in 391 resulted in his conscription. The aging bishop Valerius probably contrived the scene wherein Augustine was ordained under popular pressure. Such conscription and summary ordination were common in the African church at that time. Immediately after ordination, Augustine requested a leave of absence for intensive study of scripture. He increasingly became a man of the Bible.

Refreshed from his retreat, Augustine took up his duties as parish priest, using Paul as guide and ideal rationale for ministry. He found in Paul his theological mentor. Valerius granted permission for the establishment of a monastery, which became Augustine's seminary for the training of future priests and bishops. Valerius did more—in violation of tradition, which stipulated that when present the bishop always preached: he requested Augustine to deliver the sermon regularly. This practice became a lifelong responsibility, wherein Augustine established himself as master homiletician.

By 392, Augustine was writing to Jerome (c. 347–420) in Bethlehem, asking for Latin translations of Greek texts. After early difficulties with Greek, Augustine had made himself only somewhat proficient; he knew scant Hebrew. The same year he composed numerous biblical commentaries; on Psalms, on the Sermon on the Mount, and on the letters of Paul.

In an unprecedented move, Augustine convinced Valerius that the catholic church must bestir itself against Manichaeans, pagans, and irreligionists of all sorts. In 393, the General Council of Africa assembled in Hippo. Augustine made his address, *De fide et symbolo* (On Faith and the Creed), a stirring call for catholic reform and evangelism. This was the beginning of regular councils in the African church, with Augustine as perennial lecturer.

Valerius, fearing that he might lose his priest to a vacant see, requested that Augustine be made his coadju-

tor, and Augustine was elevated to episcopacy in 395. Valerius died the following year, leaving Augustine to rule as sole bishop of Hippo.

Two years after becoming a bishop, Augustine, now forty-three, began his *Confessiones*, a treatise expressing gratitude to God in which he employed intimate autobiographical recollections. He wrote with complete candor, revealing to the world his agonizing struggle with himself, his sexual nature, his self-will, and his pride. In this his aim was to give God the glory for his redemption, to create a paean of praise and thanksgiving, rejoicing in the grace of a God who had stooped so low to save so fallen a sinner. [*For discussion of Augustine's recollections from a literary point of view, see* Autobiography.]

Simultaneously, the *Confessions* was a theological work in which Augustine presented his positions on the Incarnation and the Trinity. In the three concluding books he proffered a study on memory, time, and *Genesis*, weaving the work of the Holy Spirit into the act of creation. He developed in the *Confessions* the theological direction in which he continued to move, emphasizing divine predestination, personal religious experience through conscious conversion, and the direct relationship of the believer to God. Augustine's opus in praise of God, drawing on his spiritual journey, stands as a masterpiece in the world's devotional literature.

Theological Controversies. Immediately after taking up his duties as priest in Hippo, Augustine lost no time in launching his attack on his mortal enemies, the Manichaeans. He denounced Manichaean cosmology, the view of man and man's sin, and especially the concept of God as having human attributes and anatomical features. The error that Augustine repudiated repeatedly was the attribution of evil to deity. The dualistic Manichaeans claimed that good and evil had their origin in two distinct deities. For Augustine, the one true God could not be blamed for the existence of evil.

In 392, Augustine engaged in public debate with the Manichaean bishop Fortunatus. Augustine, the consummate debater, so demolished Fortunatus that the Manichaean did not appear for the third day of the contest. Augustine followed up his victory with a scathing polemic, *Acta contra Fortunatum Manichaeum* (Against Fortunatus the Manichaean), which demonstrated his implacable attitude toward people and causes he thought heretical. He was soon the protagonist for the catholic position.

Augustine's advocacy of consistent teachings in the church is exemplified by his contributions to ecclesiology. He defined the status and role of the bishop not only as administrator but as teacher, interpreter, and defender of pure doctrine. A bishop was responsible for

determining orthodoxy, through use of the pronouncements of councils as well as scripture, and for eradicating heresy. At no point does this issue come into clearer focus than in Augustine's protracted and painful conflict with the Donatists. [See Donatism].

Donatism provoked a major schism, almost exclusively affecting the African church, dividing it into warring camps. The Donatists accused the Catholics of having a blemished priesthood and thus no true sacraments. Against this view, Augustine lucidly argued that the efficacy of the sacraments does not depend upon the worthiness of the priest. "My origin is Christ, my root is Christ, my head is Christ," he claimed. "The seed of which I was born, is the word of God . . . I believe not in the minister by whom I was baptized, but in Christ, who alone justifies the sinner and can forgive guilt" (Against Petilianus 1.1.7).

Augustine repudiated Donatist insistence that if catholics were to join the Donatist church they must be rebaptized. It was the universal church that Augustine proclaimed, and baptism does not profit the recipient unless the sinner returns to the true fold. The esse (being) of the church is not found in the personal character of the several Christians in it but in the union of the whole church with Christ. The church is not made up of saints as the Donatists held but of a mixed body of saints and more or less repentant sinners. Augustine insisted that weak members must be patiently borne by the church—as in the parable of the wheat and tares. How can there be a full separation of saints and sinners prior to the final judgment?

After two major colloquies in which Augustine led the attack, stringent imperial laws were enacted against the Donatists, banishing their clergy from the country. In 415, they were forbidden to hold religious assemblies on pain of death. Augustine advocated and applauded the use of imperial force to bring such heretics under control.

In his early work De libero arbitrio (On Free Will), written 388–396, Augustine endeavored to explain the apparent contradiction of the existence of evil in the world with the goodness of an omnipotent deity. Evil, Augustine assayed, was the result of Adam's free will. God would not permit man to be completely free without giving him the potentiality of doing wrong or right. From Adam's sin all later humanity inherited the inclination toward evil, thus, all humans since Adam have been sinners. Only God's grace could overcome that propensity. No number of good works chosen freely by latter-day men and women could atone for so grievous a fall. God proffered salvation to those he deigns to give grace, knowing that many would refuse it. For humankind, the possibility of eternal damnation was the price

of moral freedom. Divine foreknowledge does not obliterate human freedom. God simply foresees the choice that free moral agents will make.

It was the brilliant Celtic monk Pelagius (d. 418) who confronted Augustine with the fundamental issue of the nature of humankind. Shocked by the gross immorality of culture, Pelagius called for a righteous responsibility on the part of Christian believers. He soon had an enthusiastic following. The Pelagian view was later advocated by Julian, bishop of Eclanum, who became the chief theological adversary of Augustine's later years. Against this school Augustine directed his anti-Pelagian writings, a corpus of some fifteen works. The controversy with Pelagianism occasioned extended debate on questions of human freedom, responsibility, and man's relation to God. [See Pelagianism and the biography of Pelagius.]

Pelagius claimed that what one does, "either laudable or blameworthy," depends upon the individual. Human nature has the inherent capacity for achievement. Augustine, in De Spiritu et littera (On the Spirit and the Letter) and later in De natura et gratia (On Nature and Grace), insisted that grace alone enables fallen humanity to achieve anything worthy. Freedom is linked with God's grace, not humanity's nature.

God is not, however, in any sense responsible for sin, nor does obedience to God's will nullify human freedom. In De gratia et libero arbitrio (On Grace and Free Will) Augustine asserts, "No man . . . when he sins, can in his heart blame God for it, but every man must impute the fault to himself. . . . Nor does it detract from man's own freedom of will when he performs any act in accordance with the will of God" (part 4).

In De praedestinatione sanctorum (On the Predestination of the Saints) and De dono perseverantiae (On the Gift of Perseverance), Augustine presents grace as independent of human desert. It is a sacred mystery why some are chosen for eternal life and others for eternal death. The mystery of faith and righteousness is hidden in God's eternal wisdom and purpose (a position John Calvin would elaborate in the sixteenth century).

"Know," said Augustine in Contra Julianum, "that good will, that good works, without the grace of God . . . can be granted to no one." How much of this position on grace reflects Augustine's personal experience of God's saving power? Augustine had attempted to save himself, through elevated wrestlings with philosophy, and found it could not be done. Man cannot save himself. Salvation is God's doing. In gratitude the believer lives. The mind as God's creation is endowed with a natural capacity for remembering, understanding, and willing. When these powers are rightly directed, the self will recognize the true order of being, its relation to

God in whose image it is. In man's fallen condition, sin holds this natural capacity in abeyance but can never completely destroy it. Grace awakens the dormant power in man to see God's image in himself.

In his discussion of grace, Augustine frequently employed the symbol of the infant—a child in constant need of a parental deity. Pelagius scoffed at such notions; for him, son, warrior, and mature adult were suitable emblems of the person in his relationship to God. Pelagius insisted, "Since perfection is possible for man, it is obligatory"; man's nature was created for perfection, and man is competent to achieve it. Augustine repeatedly assailed this theme which, for him, struck at the heart of the Christian gospel. Augustine's numerous anti-Pelagian writings testify to the unalterable position that man cannot redeem himself; man cannot depend upon himself for goodness. Whatever virtue exists in human nature is a gift from God.

It is interesting to note that Pelagius and Augustine never met face to face. In 410 Pelagius went to Hippo, hoping to meet Augustine. Indeed, Pelagius had written in advance, but received a cautious reply. When the visit took place, Augustine was conveniently absent. Augustine finally achieved the condemnation of Pelagius and Pelagianism in 431 at the Council of Ephesus. [See also Free Will and Predestination, article on Christian Concepts; Grace; and Merit, article on Christian Concepts.]

The sacraments. Attendant to Augustine's view of grace is his concept of the church: the earthen vessel for sacramental grace. For him, the catholic church represents, exclusively, the genuine infusion of love by the Holy Spirit. Sacraments are the work of God, and only in the catholic church do the sacraments attain their appropriate function; there alone can that attesting love be found.

Sacraments are visible signs representing invisible spiritual reality, outward symbols by which divine matters are exhibited. Communication of the invisible divine reality, of invisible divine power, takes place in the sacraments. The outward symbol, however, has no power to convey to the individual the divine reality unless that person's inner being is sensitive to communion with God. To that end God's grace will assist.

Augustine's list of sacraments holds baptism and the Lord's Supper as preeminent; others are ordination, marriage, exorcism, and the giving of salt to the catechumen. Without the sacraments there is no salvation. "The churches of Christ maintain it to be an inherent principle, that without baptism and partaking of the Supper of the Lord it is impossible for any man to attain either to the kingdom of God or to salvation and

everlasting life" (De peccatorum meritis et remissione; On the Wages and Remission of Sins 1.34).

Trinity and Christology. Recognized even during his lifetime as a doctor of the Latin church, Augustine clarified numerous points of doctrine. In fact, he established doctrine, not the least of which was his interpretation of the triune deity. "I am compelled to pick my way through a hard and obscure subject," he noted as he embarked on his De Trinitate (On the Trinity), an opus written over a period of twenty years (399–419). Primarily in answer to the Arians, Augustine sorted out points at issue that would later become key factors in discussion at the Council of Chalcedon in 451. [See Arianism.] While On the Trinity is unquestionably a definitive work in Christian theology, Augustine's basic suppositions are made lucid in earlier writings, including his letters and sermons. To Nebridius he wrote, "Whatever is done by the Trinity must be regarded as being done by the Father and by the Son and by the Holy Spirit together" (letter 10).

In his view of the Trinity, Augustine emphasized that there are not three Gods but one. These form a "divine unity of one and the same substance in an indivisible equality." In this Trinity "what is said of each is also said of all, on account of the indivisible working of the one and same substance" (Trinity 1.4.7, 1.12.25). He established a metaphysical ground for the Christian's threefold experience of God. In the Father, the believer knows God as source of being; in Christ, the redeemer; and in the Holy Spirit, the sanctifier.

Revelation was Augustine's starting point. The first part of On the Trinity considers the nature of faith. Citing scripture (especially passages falsely interpreted by the Arians—for example, John 14:28, John 10:30, Mark 13:32), he proves the deity of the Son and his relation to the Father. Augustine argues at length that the Son is in no way subordinate to the Father. Previously, Tertullian and Origen had insisted on subordination of the Son and Holy Spirit to the Father. For Augustine, there "is so great an equality in that Trinity that not only the Father is not greater than the Son, as regards divinity, but neither are the Father and the Son greater than the Holy Spirit" (Trinity 8). The Holy Spirit proceeds from Father and Son and enjoys the same essential nature. Relations between the persons of the Trinity are not of degree or order but of causality. The Father is "the beginning of the whole divinity. . . . He therefore who proceeds from the Father and the Son is referred back to Him from whom the Son was born." The Holy Spirit is the unifying principle in the godhead, "a certain unutterable communion of Father and Son." Every theophany is thus a work of the three, even though in such

divine manifestations the appearance is frequently that of only one of the persons. This is because of the limitations of the "bodily creature" necessary for a theophany. One cannot repeat the words Father, Son, Holy Spirit simultaneously and without an interval. Accordingly "both each are in each, and all in each, and each in all, and all in all, and all are one."

When speaking of the Trinity, Augustine's Latin term for what the Greeks called *hupostasis* is *persona* ("person"), but he frankly admits the inadequacy of any appellation. Ultimately the key to knowing God—the Trinity—is love, for love itself implies a trinity "he that loves, and that which is loved, and love itself" (*Trinity* 8.10.14). In the final analysis, Augustine himself, after years of contemplation, admits that the human mind may behold the Trinity "only in an enigma." Only when liberated from the restrictions of physical being will man be able to comprehend completely "why the Holy Spirit is not the Son, although He proceeds from the Father" (*Trinity* 15.24.45).

Augustine declared that the whole of doctrine might be summed up as service to God through faith, hope, and love. This principle underlies his work the *Enchiridion*. Taking the Lord's Prayer as starting point, he develops the theme of Christ as mediator and considers the Incarnation as manifestation of God's saving grace. He explicates the Apostles' Creed and with rare sensitivity assesses the resurrection.

Philosophy of History. On 24 August 410 Alaric invaded Rome. Son of a great Visigoth family, Alaric regarded himself a defender of the empire and a faithful Christian. His sack of Rome lasted only three days, and the city was by no means destroyed, nor was it the end of the Western Empire. The psychological effect, however, was horrendous. "If Rome can perish, what can be safe?" lamented Jerome. Decisiveness and dependability in government were in serious question. It was in response to the charge that abandonment of the ancient Roman deities and widespread acceptance of Christianity had brought about the fall that Augustine, in 413–427, produced *De civitate Dei* (City of God). His immediate assertion was that rather than bringing down the city the Christians had saved it from total ruin. The work proceeds to render his brilliant critique of Greco-Roman culture, drawing illustrative material from the greatest historians and writers. Augustine had enormous respect for and loyalty to that culture yet he believed it to be morally rotten, and he goes to considerable lengths to point out degradation of Roman standards of conduct, life patterns, and sexual behavior. He pictures gross licentiousness and obscenities pertaining to Liber and other deities. By contrast, he de-

picts the health, vigor, and cleanliness of the Christian life. Thus, as the Pax Romana deteriorated, Augustine became spokesman for a new, fresh, Christian social order.

In *City of God* Augustine formulates his philosophy of history. God's ultimate purpose is being worked out in history, as illustrated through his metaphor of the two cities: the City of God is rooted in love of God; the City of Earth finds its radicle in love of self. Though the church is not exactly equated with the City of God, God's church does proceed like a pilgrim through history to its eschatological consummation. The people of God are called—predestined—to find significance individually and collectively in God's holy purposes. The Christian thus lives in sublime confidence that whatever the circumstance, God's will finally prevails.

Morality and Ethics. *City of God* best illustrates a facet of Augustine seldom recognized: he was a moral rigorist who permitted nothing to stand in the way of either individual or group righteousness. Neither personal relationships nor individual aspirations should be permitted to thwart the doing of God's will. Sinful pleasures were intolerable. It was in part reaction to his profligate past that prompted the complete turnabout in which he became the seer of an ethical, morally upright deity.

Scrupulous observance of the ethical code was required of Augustine's people, especially his clergy. On one occasion, certain members of Augustine's monastery had not complied with the vow of poverty and at death willed large estates to their families. Augustine reacted swiftly and sternly, requiring that all draw up statements of their holdings prior to being admitted to the order. In his monastery, Augustine established a way of life that was to become the prototype for the cenobite. It is claimed that his own widowed sister, abbess of the convent he established in Hippo, was never permitted to converse with her brother save in the presence of a third party. Augustine's moralism must be seen in the context of his ideal of blessedness. It was said of him, "Everyone who lives with him, lives the life described in the *Acts of the Apostles*" (sermon 356).

Final Years. On 26 September 426 Augustine named his successor, Eraclius, and arranged for the latter to assume responsibility for the practical affairs of the diocese. At that time Bishop Possidius agreed to write a biography of Augustine. His biography captures the spirit of the man Augustine. He tells of daily life in the monastery, stressing the simplicity of the monks' lives, and of Augustine's concern for the poor. Augustine the eminent theologian is barely visible.

May of 429 saw the army of Genseric's Vandals cross from Spain and march through Mauretania, spreading

havoc and desolation. Roman rule in Africa collapsed. Augustine spent these concluding years comforting and reassuring his people. *On the Predestination of the Saints* and *On the Gift of Perseverance*, written 428–429, reflect the message that God alone would provide faith and courage for his elect. This became a doctrine of survival.

In 426 Augustine began to correct and catalog his vast literary output in his *Retractiones*. His wish, and that of his fellow bishops, was that whatever befell Hippo, Augustine's library was to be preserved. Fortunately for posterity, it was.

As Vandals were besieging Hippo, Augustine was dying, insisting—perhaps for the first time—that he be alone; he read, in these final hours, the penitential psalms hung on the walls of his room. On 28 August 430, while prayers were being offered in the churches of Hippo, Augustine died. It was designated his day in the lexicon of Roman Catholic saints.

Augustine's place in Western history is not to be contested. He was a man of science (in spite of his deprecation of scientific knowledge) whose power to scrutinize nature was remarkable. He engaged in an unrelenting quest for knowledge that rendered him a keen observer of human nature, and he probed the deep recesses of the human soul. Augustine set the compass for much of the Western Christian culture that followed. His interpretation of Plato dominated most of Christian thought in the West until the rediscovery of Aristotle in the thirteenth century. Humanists of the Renaissance relied upon Augustine. His impress on Reformation leaders is great. Luther followed his conception of grace. A reading of Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* reveals that second to the Bible, Augustine is the most frequently quoted source. In the eighteenth century, John Wesley studied Augustine diligently, even when he came to differ strongly with him. Indeed, even those who most heartily reject Augustine's anthropology have found it necessary to come to terms with him. Pietistic, sentimental studies of Augustine during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are being replaced with frank appreciation not only for his intellectual and spiritual preeminence but also for his profound human qualities.

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1842). In spite of errors and omissions, Migne's edition remains an essential source, but it should be studied along with Palémon Glorieux's *Pour revaloriser Migne: Tables rectificatives* (Lille, 1952). Augustine's collected works can also be found in *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, vols. 12, 25, 28, 33–34, 36, 40–44, 51–53, 57–58, 60, 63, 74, 77, and 84–85 (Vienna, 1866–1876), which is the product of good critical scholarship.

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Warren Thomas Smith

AUGUSTUS (63 BCE–14 CE), Roman emperor. Born Gaius Octavius, he was the grandnephew of Julius Caesar. Adopted by Caesar, and made his chief heir at nineteen, Octavius built upon Caesar's name, charisma, military success, political connections, and fortune. Calculating, opportunistic, an unfailingly shrewd judge of men and circumstances, he emerged in 31 BCE from thirteen years of political chaos and civil war triumphant over Mark Antony and sole master of the Roman world.

Exhausted by the effects of civil war and seeking only peace and a return of order and prosperity, Roman citizens and provincial subjects alike hailed Octavius as a savior sent by divine Providence. He did not fall short of their expectations. To mark the beginning of a new order, he assumed the name *Augustus* in 27 BCE. In a series of gradual steps, he restructured the Roman political system. While preserving the forms of republican government, he in effect established a monarchy, concentrating in his own hands all real power, political, military, financial, and legal. This power was used with great and enduring success to reform the administration of the provinces, the finances of the Roman state, and every aspect of military and civil life. In so doing he laid the basis for two centuries of unparalleled peace and prosperity in western Europe and throughout the Mediterranean world. The golden age of Rome's empire, "the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous" (Gibbon), was the supreme legacy of Augustus.

Himself deeply pious, Augustus understood fully the important role that religion plays in securing that unity of shared belief that is essential to the integration and successful functioning of a pluralistic society. Through carefully orchestrated and highly effective propaganda techniques, he projected the image of himself as a divinely sent savior; and the very name he assumed, *Augustus*, evoked in Latin and in its Greek form, *Sebastos*, an aura of divine consecration and charismatic authority.

Augustus undertook a thorough reform of Roman state religion. He restored some eighty-two temples that had fallen into decay and built numerous new ones. He revitalized old cult forms and priesthoods, such as the *lares compitales* and the Fratres Arvales, and instituted new ones, such as Pax Augusta and the Seviri Augustales. He carefully steered public approval of his person and policies into religious channels. Particularly in the Greek provinces of the East, he permitted himself to be worshiped as a god. Roman state cult celebrated the divine element and creative force that resided in Augustus through the cult of the Genius Augusti. Religious reform and innovation were linked to programs of social and moral reform, aimed at restoring traditional Roman values of service and piety toward country, family, and the gods.

The Augustan program tapped the wellsprings of popular piety in an age of religious revival. It mobilized in its service literary and artistic talent of enduring genius: Vergil's *Aeneid*, Horace's *Roman Odes* and *Carmen saeculare*, Livy's history of Rome, and the iconography of the Altar of Augustan Peace (the Ara Pacis) at Rome all celebrated, each in its own medium, the message that the gods themselves had willed the peace-bringing and benevolent rule of Rome and Augustus over the entire human race.

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J. Rufus Fears

AUM. *See* Oṃ.

AUROBINDO GHOSE (1872–1950), yogin, nationalist, poet, critic, thinker, spiritual leader of India. Born in Calcutta (15 August 1872), Aurobindo Ghose was ed-

ucated in England from the age of seven to age twenty-one at the insistence of his father, Dr. Krishnadhan Ghose, who had been one of the first Indians educated in England. Having grown up ignorant of Indian culture and religion, Aurobindo neither discovered nor appreciated Indian languages, literature, or history until he returned to India after college, in 1893. He served for a time as a teacher of French and English and as vice principal and acting principal of Baroda College. In 1906 Aurobindo joined the political movement of Indian resistance to British colonial rule and became a prominent voice of the Nationalist party, arguing for complete independence from Britain. Through his articles in periodicals such as *Bande Mataram*, Aurobindo nourished a revolutionary consciousness among Indians by addressing the issues of *swarāj* and *swadeśi* (both centered on self-rule) and boycott. He was open to the use of armed revolt as well as nonviolent means for achieving independence. In this he was flexible and pragmatic: the means of social change were selected on the basis of circumstances, not adherence to an absolute ethical principle.

In 1908 Aurobindo was arrested in connection with an unsuccessful bombing episode against a British district judge. Although he was ultimately acquitted, he spent a year in the Alipore jail during the investigation and trial. During this imprisonment his interest in yoga deepened. In 1910, following "a sudden command from above," Aurobindo moved to French India. He spent the next forty years of his life in Pondicherry, formulating his vision of spiritual evolution and Integral Yoga, and refusing to pursue direct involvement in political events.

"Spiritual evolution," or the evolution of consciousness, is the central framework for understanding Aurobindo's thought. *Consciousness* is a rich and complex term for Aurobindo. Consciousness is inherent in all things, in seemingly inert matter as well as plant, animal, human, and suprahuman life. It participates in the various levels of being in various ways. *Sachchidānanda*, literally the highest level of "being, consciousness, and bliss," is also known as the Absolute. The Supermind mediates *sachchidānanda* to the multiplicity of the world. The Overmind serves as delegate of the Supermind. Intuitive Mind is a kind of consciousness of the heart that discerns the truth in momentary flashes rather than in a comprehensive grasp. Illumined Mind communicates consciousness by vision, Higher Mind through conceptual thought. Mind generally integrates reality through cognitive, intellectual, and mental perceptions rather than through direct vision, yet mind is also open to the higher levels of consciousness, for it is basically oriented to Supermind, in which it partici-

pates in a derivative way. The Psyche is the conscious form of the soul that makes possible the evolution from ignorance to light. Life is cosmic energy through which the divine is received and made manifest. Matter, the lowest level in Aurobindo's hierarchy of consciousness manifestation, is not reducible to mere material substance, but is an expression of *sachchidānanda* in diminished form.

This hierarchical view of consciousness or spirit must also be seen in a process perspective in which the supreme is seen as continuously being and becoming manifest in these many levels of being. Consciousness liberates itself through an inner law that directs evolution. Spiritual evolution is also seen as a series of ascents from material, physical existence up to supramental existence, in which we are able to reach our true being and fulfillment.

Yoga is a means by which this evolutionary thrust can be consciously assisted. Whereas evolution proceeds slowly and indirectly, yoga functions more quickly and directly. Evolution seeks the divine through nature, while yoga reaches out for the divine as transcendent to nature.

Aurobindo's Integral Yoga is so named because it seeks to incorporate the essence and processes of the old yogas, blending their methods and fruits into one system. It is integral also insofar as it seeks an integral and total change of consciousness and nature, not for the individual alone but for all of humanity and the entire cosmos. Unlike some yogas of the past, Integral Yoga does not seek release from the cycle of birth and death but seeks a transformation of life and existence, by, for, and through the divine. In most yogas, ascent to the divine is emphasized. In Integral Yoga, ascent to the divine is but the first step; the real goal is descent of the new consciousness that has been attained by the ascent.

Disciples, admirers, and advocates of Aurobindo's vision of spiritual evolution and system of Integral Yoga gather in communities throughout the world. Best known are those who have begun construction of Auroville, a city near Pondicherry designed to embody Aurobindo's ideal for a transformed humanity, and the ashram at Pondicherry where Aurobindo himelf lived for forty years.

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JUNE O'CONNOR

AUSTRALIAN RELIGIONS. [*This entry consists of four articles on the Aboriginal religions of Australia:*

An Overview
Mythic Themes
Modern Movements
History of Study

The overview article presents a topical survey of the religious traditions of Australian Aborigines. The article on Mythic Themes *examines some of the major motifs of Aboriginal mythic traditions. The article on* Modern Movements *discusses the alterations in Aboriginal religious beliefs and practices that have ensued following the European colonization of the continent. Finally, the article on* History of Study *traces the development of the modern scholarly study of the religious systems of Aboriginal Australia. For information concerning Christianity in Australia, see* Christianity, *article on* Christianity in Australia and New Zealand.]

An Overview

Although modified in varying ways as a result of the European conquest of Aboriginal Australia, traditional Aboriginal religious systems in the north and center of the continent have remained remarkably intact in their basic features. Non-European influences affected some regions, too. The coasts of northern Arnhem Land and, to a lesser degree, northwest Australia had long contact with "Macassan" (Indonesian) traders. The Aboriginal cultures of the Cape York Peninsula were open to influences from Papua New Guinea via the Torres Strait Islands. For the southwestern and southeastern regions of the continent, most surviving information on the indigenous religious systems comes from the often unsystematic reports of early observers.

Allowing for varying interpretations of material, the strength of Aboriginal religion appears to rest on a clear comprehension of two aspects: (1) what constitutes the idea of the sacred and (2) the mutuality of associations between deities, human beings, and the sphere of nature, together forming a system of interdependent inter-

action. The religious universe as conceived by Aborigines was not confined to the supernatural dimension in relation to ordinary social living but included the whole of the natural environment. This overarching frame enhanced and illuminated the social world of men and women.

This article outlines the lineaments of Aboriginal religion, noting how it permeates all aspects of social living. A crucial concept in understanding this religion is the Dreaming, with its inherent power. An explanation of Aboriginal religion recognizes the significance of an integrated belief and action system which has practical application through the performance of ritual. Various regional patters are described to indicate some of the variations that are possible without losing sight of the essential ingredients. Finally, attention is drawn to the continuing influence of Aboriginal religion.

A Living Traditional Religion. Religion is, or was traditionally, relevant to all members of a particular Aboriginal society in one way or another. There was unanimity of belief in regard to basic issues or, at least, absence of overt dissent. This ensured continuity of a way of living that, although inevitably subject to internal change, was constructed essentially on a model believed to have been originally designed by the deities themselves. Moreover, that model provided a working hypothesis that stipulated a complementary relationship between spiritual and material elements. The interplay between the two gave meaning to life and an assurance of essential truths. The structure of this body of knowledge, framed in symbolic terms, was manifested in each case through the thread of personal religious experience that commenced at conception and extended through the conventional highlights of a person's life to physical death and, in most belief systems, to eventual rebirth.

Throughout Aboriginal Australia, we could speak of one religion with many differing sociocultural manifestations: basic religious concepts are the same, but there is also considerable variation. Several factors contributed to this seeming diversity. There were regional differences not only in language and in social organization but also in terrain and in climatic conditions. Religious responses to environmental factors are probably just as significant as the ways in which different people structure their relations within and between social groups, categorizing persons they regard as kin and defining those who are responsible for arranging and performing religious rites. Within the range of possible religious content, local aesthetic styles emphasize or select some elements rather than others, so that distinctive patterns emerge.

Aboriginal religion was closely and sensitively linked

AUSTRALIA

Arafura Sea

Torres Strait

TORRES STRAIT ISLANDS

MELVILLE I. CROKER I.

BATHURST I.

GOULBURN I.

Darwin

Cape York Pen.

CORAL SEA ISLANDS TERRITORY

Timor Sea

Arnhem Land

Gulf of Carpentaria

Indian Ocean

Port Keats

GROOTE EYLANDT

Kimberley Plateau

NORTHERN

Wave Hill

Tanami Desert

Great Barrier Reef

Balgo

TERRITORY

Great Sandy Desert

Yuendumu

Boulia

Tropic of Capricorn

Mt. Liebig

Mt. Eclipse

Lake Disappointment

Haast's Bluff

Alice Springs

QUEENSLAND

Jigalong

Gibson Desert

Simpson Desert

Tropic of Capricorn

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Brisbane

Great Victoria Desert

Lake Eyre

Yuin

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Ooldea

Lake Torrens

NEW SOUTH WALES

Nullarbor Plain

Perth

Great Australian Bight

Adelaide

Sydney

Canberra
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERR.

VICTORIA

Forest

Woodlands

Melbourne

Grassland

Desert

Indian Ocean

Tasman Sea

Cereal and sheep farming

0   400   800 km

TASMANIA

0   200   400 miles

Hobart

with local group territories and with the particular physiographic features within them. Nevertheless some religious cults, in terms of their ritual and mythic sponsorship, are spatially widespread and mobile. The Kunapipi (Gunabibi), for example, covers some thousands of kilometers, from Arnhem Land to the Western Desert and beyond, assuming different guises but retaining key symbolic representations. More generally, many mythic beings (or deities) in the creative era of the Dreaming traveled over large stretches of country, through several language or dialectal groups. The mythic fact that they *were* travelers does not negate or

diminish their local relevance to particular areas and sites. However, the high level of mythic and ritual mobility may have had a bearing on the development of key religious similarities.

Source of the sacred. Throughout the continent, Aborigines generally believed that the natural world was originally, and essentially, formless. It was there, as a "given," waiting to be activated. Human time began with the emergence and appearance of mythic beings or gods, in human or other forms. They moved across the country, meeting other characters, changing the contours and shapes of the land and imbuing it with spe-

cific meanings. Everywhere they went, whatever they left behind them contained something of their own mythic or sacred essence. Some of them were responsible for creating the first people, the far-distant forebears of contemporary Aborigines. They put such people at places that were to be their "estates," or local group territories, noting the customs they were to follow, the languages they were to speak, and the rites they would have to perform. When those deities "died" physically, or disappeared beyond the sociocultural confines of a particular social unit, or were transformed into something else, they left evidence of their presence on earth in the shape of hills, rocks, paintings, and so on.

These characters themselves, and all that is associated with them, belong to the Dreaming—a time everlasting, eternal. [*See* Dreaming, The.] Their spiritual essence lives on at particular sites, within the concept of the Dreaming *and* within the mundane world. However, the idea of a world everlasting depended on them and on the ability of human beings to gain access to the power, the concentrated spiritual quality, that they were believed to possess. This power is, partly, the major concern of the dimension of the sacred: partly, because everything that is either directly or indirectly related to the Dreaming is sacred. And the most sacred of all are the deities themselves. At their sites they remain enshrined in their aura of sacredness, their special power, an ever-present spiritual resource and inspiration for all living things, including human beings.

To understand the idea of the sacred in Aboriginal religion, it is necessary to identify the nature of the power inherent in the deities. Two points are especially relevant to this. First, deities in a spiritual sense are represented in the tangible world by particular creatures or elements. Many of them, not all, were shape-changing, which, in the Dreaming, exemplifies their affinity with nature. They may be simultaneously both human and in the form of an animal or other natural phenomenon. This means that such creatures share the same life force as the deity with which they are associated. Second, in a different sense, human beings also have a direct spiritual relationship with particular deities. Traditional Aborigines believe that no child can be conceived or born without its fetus being first animated through some action relating to a particular mythic character that also involves the child's parents and/or other consanguineous relatives.

For instance, in the central desert area, an unusual event, or one that is interpreted in those terms, must be experienced in order for animation or conception to occur. A man may spear a kangaroo which behaves in a "strange" manner. Later he gives some of the meat to his wife, who vomits after eating it. She may know im-

mediately, or after he has identified the cause in a dream, that a mythic being has either transferred part of his or her sacred essence, via the medium of an intermediary, to the fetus within her or has stimulated or activated the conception. In northeastern Arnhem Land, spirit-landings fulfill this function. Spirit children (or child spirits) are associated with particular water holes or sites and with the relevant mythic beings connected with them. They take the shape of some creature that, when caught, escapes from the hunter or otherwise behaves unusually. Then the spirit child appears to him (or to one of his close sisters or father's sisters) in a dream asking where its mother is. In all such cases, the particular area in which such an incident takes place is of significance in the social and ritual life of the child who is eventually born, and the area concerned is preferably related to the father's country.

This event is a human being's first, albeit unconscious, experience of the sacred. The deity conveys the sacred essence of life to a potential person. It is the deity who bestows or withholds life: according to traditional belief, no child is born without this spiritual animation. Accordingly, all human beings have within them some part of a particular mythic being. In a sense, they are living representatives of the deity.

The deities are also responsible for the maintenance of all natural growth, the coming and the going of the seasons, the renewal of the land's fertility, and the replenishment of the species within it. The sites at which the mythic beings reside are reservoirs of this precious force, considered to be an indestructible power that remains unimpaired and active from the beginning of time. However, the power is accessible only in particular circumstances and can be released only by persons who are specifically linked spiritually to the deity concerned. Every region contains a large number of resource centers, each associated with one or more deities or mythic beings. Each of these beings is responsible for particular species—in some cases, for several species. In order to generate seasonal renewal, a fairly wide patterning of ritual cooperation is necessary. This usually involves persons variously associated with differing mythic beings and their representations. The whole country is a living thing: the sites of the deities are latent repositories of life, of particular forms of life, awaiting activation through the intervention of human beings.

While the spiritual animation of a child's fetus might appear to be fortuitous, from an Aboriginal viewpoint it is an essentially predictable occurrence. Two factors need to be taken into account. In the first place, any woman in the appropriate condition is vulnerable when passing near a site where a particular life essence is lo-

cated. The expectation is that, provided the deity in question is also relevant to her potential child, some event is likely to take place which triggers off the act of animation—or can be interpreted as doing so. The second factor is the actual event itself, an event (that is, consisting of some sign) that must occur before the life essence can be transferred. Thus the life force controlled by a deity is not released automatically: human intervention is necessary, and ritual is the key to that.

Social structuring of religion. Most traditional Aboriginal societies have words that can be translated as "sacred" or "set apart." These imply a special quality which may prove dangerous to persons who do not have the appropriate knowledge and skill and right to handle it. Such words as *mareiin*, *daal*, or *duyu* (in northeastern Arnhem Land), *daragu* or *maia* (in the southeastern Kimberley), *djugurba* or *dumar* (in the Western Desert) or *tjurunga* (in central Australia), and so on refer to particular rituals, emblems, locations or places, songs, objects, or persons who are separated in some way from ordinary everyday affairs. The deities are sacred, as are all things associated with them. The condition of being "set apart" involves particular rules of access and exclusion on the basis of age, sex, and ritual status. However, while such Aboriginal vernacular terms do imply some measure of secrecy, Aborigines do not suggest that their religion is confined solely to that dimension. Religion has a much wider connotation, as does the idea of sacredness. In relation to any one Aboriginal society, all adult members, men and women, have a reasonably good grasp of the main tenets of their religion and what it is intended to achieve. Moreover, although much of the early literature has emphasized men's secret-sacred rituals, there is now recognition of a similar sphere having the same connotation of secrecy in relation to the ritual activities of women (Kaberry, 1939; C. H. Berndt, 1965). What is involved here is a division of labor between the sexes, with each sex being concerned with different but complementary aspects of the *same* religious system of belief. Each division involves the gradual movement of novices and participants from one level of understanding to the next, and each provides processes that ensure that religious information (*their* information: both general and specific) is handed on from one generation to the next.

With a very few exceptions, the structure of religion in most Aboriginal areas makes it obligatory for men and women to separate on particular occasions as far as their own secret-sacred matters are concerned. Since religion constitutes a celebration in community terms, most large mythic and ritual sequences provide opportunities, and indeed stipulate necessary occasions, for men and women to come together in the performance

of ritual and song. Such collective manifestations may take place in a general camping area where a cleared space has been prepared, and they are an integral part of the proceedings. Virtually all of the most important ritual cycles have "inside" and "outside" sections. The efficacy of dramatic performances associated with a ritual sequence would be impaired if, for some reason, they did not incorporate both inside and outside sections.

It is useful to think of Aboriginal religion as including both secret-sacred and open-sacred components. Within the context of the open-sacred dimension, all members of a community participate—men and women, the uninitiated, and children. Too often in the past sharp dichotomy was drawn between the religious activities and experiences of men and women. Earlier writers regarded women as "profane," as almost antithetical to religious matters. Even those who recognized that women participated in the religious affairs of their community were too ready to claim that this participation was subordinate, nonactive, peripheral, or even negative (see Durkheim, 1915; Warner, 1937). These views have for the most part long since disappeared from the anthropological literature. In their place has appeared a more balanced view of the traditional situation, one that emphasizes equality but not necessarily similarity. It is generally agreed, however, that the most spectacular rituals, with the use of a wide range of emblems, are carried out on a corporate basis by fully initiated men on their own secret-sacred ground, which is usually situated away from the main domestic camping areas. Less obtrusive, but no less significant religiously, are the rituals that women in certain regions organize and perform on their own secret-sacred ground. Both concern the same religious mythology, but in partly differing interpretative frames. Each draws on the life-giving properties inherent in such ritual sequences and pays special attention to relationships with particular land.

Two further, mutually exclusive, points should be noted about the secret-sacred grounds of men and women. First, it would be unthinkable in a traditional context for a man to enter or even go near the ground that is set aside for women-only affairs or for a woman to encroach on a men-only domain. Should that occur, even inadvertently, insofar as a woman is concerned it would have once meant her death by spearing or through sorcery. In any case, the sacred grounds of men and women are mostly regarded as being dangerous to members of the opposite sex. Not all adults of the relevant sex can freely enter the men's or women's secret-sacred ground; entry rests on invitation from those persons who are authorized to give it. The right to enter is dependent, for instance, on a person's position in the

religious hierarchy or on the degree of familiarity he or she has with the ritual and songs. Only religious leaders and fully initiated men (or women, in their sphere) could go freely to their own ground.

The second point is that most of the large ritual sequences, which traditionally continued over a period of several weeks, usually contained both secret- and open-sacred components. This called for a great deal of preparation. Emblems had to be made or refurbished, the secret-sacred ground had to be attended to, and invitations had to be sent to people in surrounding areas. Not least, food had to be collected and prepared, usually by women. However, specified men would be sent out fairly regularly in order to supplement the diet with meat. Men of ritual importance—who by reason of their spiritual linkage with a particular mythic being are "owners" of the appropriate territorial and myth and ritual combination—act in a directive role. Chronological age is not crucial in this respect. Other things being equal, religious authority devolves upon a man who has considerable religious experience and knowledge as well as influence in his community. Such men are usually middle-aged or a little older. The efficacy of a ritual depends on them. They are the directors, supervising the actual performances that are carried out by the so-called workers, but in a different ritual sequence, controlled by other owners, their roles will be reversed. Any large ritual enterprise is a cooperative undertaking by members of the home camp as well as by visitors from adjacent areas.

Formal exposure to religion. An initiation sequence would normally attract quite a large number of visitors who are specially invited to attend and to participate. A person's initiation really commences with the events surrounding his or her conception. Those events are ritualized to the extent that they constitute a personal experience with minimal social involvement. Nevertheless, this represents an essential stage in the progression of life because it transfers to the potential social being a sacred quality that is also a hallmark of humanity. Without that, further religious involvement would be impossible or unthinkable. Where physical birth is concerned, no such ritual dramatization takes place: it is simply regarded as a natural ritual in itself. In other words, in this respect the importance of the physical act of birth has been transferred to a "man-made" ritual context and is consequently generalized to serve as a basic model that can relate to life renewal. Around that basic concept has been woven a symbolic patterning that is relevant to all initiation rituals and to many of the great ritual epics.

Thus the crises in the life of all males are clustered around prebirth, the onset and completion of formal

initiation, subsequent ritual involvement, and eventual physical (not spiritual) death. The process is somewhat different and less formalized for females. Whatever importance may be placed socially and personally on betrothal and marriage, these features have little part to play in religion—except that in a number of examples a man who is responsible for initiating a boy or youth (for example, in relation to circumcision) is usually one of his potential affines and obliged to arrange that he receive a wife. There is, however, no direct religious underpinning in regard to marital arrangements.

In much of the literature, initiation of youths appears to stand out as representing virtually a separate occasion, complete in itself. This is not the case, however, because it is usually integrated within a broader mythic and ritual constellation. Initiation flows, as it were, from and into something else of a religious nature. For example, in northeastern Arnhem Land there are two forms of initiation. One is relevant to novices of the Dua moiety; the other to novices of the complementary moiety, Yiridja. (In that society patrilineal moieties are important social indicators in religious mythology and ritual.) Each is associated with distinctive initiatory ritual. Dua novices between the ages of about six to nine years are introduced to the Djunggawon, the first of three ritual sequences that concern differing aspects of the great Wawalag mythology. [*See* Wawalag.]

There is, or was, agreement among Aborigines that particular rituals are most appropriate for novices to be exposed to for preliminary religious purposes. Such events are usually marked by a physical operation (or its equivalent) that symbolizes the passing of boys or youths through one stage and indicates their preparedness to go further; the pressures to continue are just as strong as they are for the first initiation rites. The important aspect, however, is that any initation rite, although focused on particular novices, is also a teaching and learning experience that concerns older youths and men as well. Learning is correlated with active participation and occurs in a gradual progression through a series of mythic and ritual revelations. Whatever religious ritual is being carried out, there are always present some persons who are being taught. Thus a major task of religious leaders and fully initiated men is to pass on their knowledge selectively, to those persons who are entitled or have been prepared to receive it. This is a process that traditionally continues throughout life. Associated with it is the application or utilization of sacred knowledge in order to achieve the aims that are stipulated in regard to specific rites.

Where female initiation is concerned, the focus is on puberty and the time is usually the onset of first menstruation. Generally speaking, female initiation rites are

not as spectacular, nor do they extend over such long periods, as those of boys. Moreover, they need not involve the whole community or visitors from other areas. The reasons are not necessarily clear. For instance, men emphasize the importance of their own rituals (including initiation), and in many cases women support this view. It seems true, however, that women are more heavily involved than men in the domestic round of activities, particularly in regard to nurturing children. Additionally, in the traditional Aboriginal scene, women were usually the main "breadwinners," responsible for supplying the greater part of the food supply for themselves, their menfolk, and their children. On the whole, the men's contribution to the food supply mainly concerned meat or large sea creatures, the supply of which was much less predictable.

There is an additional issue that has a bearing on this division of labor between the sexes. Much of men's ritual, especially when it concerns access to the life force controlled by either male or female deities or both, has to do with species and seasonal renewal. In such circumstances, the physiological attributes of females are emphasized, either directly or in symbolic terms. Where this point was specifically articulated by men, they asserted that women possessed such things naturally, while men needed to simulate them in order to accomplish what was required. There is another factor here. In many areas of Aboriginal Australia, mythic statements claim that women originally had complete control of the realm of the sacred and of all its ritual, verbal, spatial, and material components. [See the article on Mythic Themes, below.]

The final life crisis is physical death. The rites associated with death have much in common with the initiation of boys and girls. Initiation is usually treated as symbolic death, followed by ritual and social rebirth—more conspicuously so for boys. In actual physical death, the ritual is designed to ensure the spiritual survival of the deceased and his or her potential rebirth. In both cases, people have claimed that the life power derived from the deities makes such a transition possible. Mortuary rites vary considerably throughout the continent. Some are of the "delayed" kind, held at intervals over a fairly long period of time. In all cases they are concerned with re-creating or rechanneling life out of death, releasing the spiritual component of a human being from its physical receptacle and preparing it for its journey to a land of the dead—which in some instances is synonymous with the home of the immortals—there to await reincarnation. The cycle of life, therefore, continues after death, from the physical to the wholly spiritual, returning in due course to the physical dimension. That cycle is also relevant to all

natural species. This view recognizes the equal importance of the physical and the spiritual and emphasizes that human beings are spiritually indestructible because they possess that germ of life that was theirs at conception and that came from the mythic beings of the Dreaming.

Ritual activation. Myth and ritual are interdependent and mutually supporting. From the viewpoint of Aborigines, myths portray real events that belong to the realm of the Dreaming. It is true that they are said to have happened in the past. But the mythic characters who participated in them remain in the land, metamorphosed but spiritually alive, still possessing their life-giving power. In many parts of Aboriginal Australia, special words are used to express the idea of this power. In order to gain access to it and to activate it, ritual must be carried out in a particular way and under particular conditions. First, it must be planned and organized by religious leaders and others who are directly related to the mythic being or beings concerned. Second, it must re-create symbolically the original mythological events and circumstances associated with the deity or deities in the same way as they first experienced them. Third, a symbol or image of the deity (or deities), or an emblemic representation, must be present on the ritual ground. The deity (deities) must be attracted to it (them) and temporarily occupy the appropriate vehicle(s). A wide variety of such vehicles is used: for example, the Aranda *tjurunga*; the *rangga* (ritually charged) posts of northeastern Arnhem Land and various other pole and brush structures decorated in ocher designs and hung with feathered pendants; and ground paintings, carved and ornamented posts, bull-roarers, and so on. [See Tjurunga.] Fourth, there must be ritual performances in which the actors portray the deities in either their human or other forms. Such performances must replicate in all essential details the events in the myth associated with the deities; they are accompanied by stipulated songs that also recount the mythic deeds.

The ritual, therefore, involves three basic components: the possessors of power (the deities), the activators (human beings), and the activated (other aspects of nature). The above four conditions, in combination, attract the mythic being (or beings), who spiritually occupies the image or object prepared for that purpose. Through this, the original mythic situation becomes symbolically real. In that context, the deity is in a position to release the power that in turn, activates all the natural phenomena with which the ritual is concerned.

Regional Religious Systems. Some specific ritual examples, drawn from a cross section of regional religious systems, provide a range of apparently different interpretions that all support the basic frame already dis-

cussed. These demonstrate the relevance of the general picture and offer clues to meaning and explanation of Aboriginal religious phenomena.

Mobile adaptive systems. The great Kunapipi (Gunabibi), under different names, has spread across the continent from Arnhem Land to the central-western Northern Territory and as far as the southeastern Kimberley. In all these areas, local people regard it as a "cult in movement," that is, as having been brought from one place to another. It has reached, indirectly, a number of other areas as well. It does not submerge or replace what was already present in terms of local religious ritual. The outcome is rather a matter of coexistence, although in some areas it is also a matter of coordination and adaptation. In Arnhem Land, the culturally defined indigenous systems remained more or less intact: the Kunapipi was adapted mythologically, but not ritually, to the Wawalag constellation. The Kunapipi was well entrenched in the Milingimbi area at the time of William Lloyd Warner's field research there from 1926 to 1929 (see Warner, 1937, e.g., pp. 290–311; R. M. Berndt, 1951). Long before that, in 1912, Kunapipi rites were being held in the Katherine and Roper rivers areas (Spencer, 1914, pp. 162, 164) and still earlier in the Darwin area. The Kunapipi brought with it both circumcision and subincision. In northeastern Arnhem Land, for instance, there is no subincision, although novices are circumcized; subincision was not accepted there, although that proved no handicap to the incorporation of basic tenets of that cult. On the other hand, in western Arnhem Land neither circumcision nor subincision was traditionally practiced, but the Kunapipi was accepted.

Northeastern Arnhem Land, as noted, recognizes two patrilineal moiety divisions, and the great mythic and ritual cycle for the Dua moiety is the Djanggawul (Djanggau), sponsored by the mythical two sisters and brother of that name. They shaped the land, gave birth to the first people, and introduced the appropriate Dua moiety *nara* ("nest" or "womb") sacred rituals. [*See* Djanggawul.] Essentially, the myth and songs makes clear the primary intentions in the ritual, which reenacts all the major incidents that took place during the original travels of the Djanggawul, including the natural species they saw.

On the sacred ground, a special hut representing a uterus is erected. Within it are stored secret-sacred *rangga* poles, representing those used by the Djanggawul as well as the unborn children (that is, the first people) within the wombs of the two sisters. In ritual dancing, *rangga* are removed from the hut by one postulant after another, and their actions in manipulating these refer to the revitalization of particular aspects of nature. In the main camp, women and uninitiated

youths are covered with *ngainmara* (conical mats) that, again, represent the wombs of the sisters. These are later cast aside and the people emerge, thus reenacting the first mythic scene of birth. Additionally, in the present sense of the ritual, participants reaffirm the continuity of the birth process. Among the ritual sequences is the sacramental eating of cycad palm nut "bread" that has been specially prepared by women. Sacred invocations are called and songs sung over the bread, which is said to be transformed from being ordinarily sacred to achieve the status of a *rangga* emblem possessed of the power inherent in the Djanggawul. On the one hand this bread symbolizes all possible food resources available in the places invoked. On the other, when eaten by Djanggawul ritual participants it is said to enhance their sacred quality and strengthen the bonds between them.

Complementing the Djanggawul cycle is the Laindjung, of the opposite moiety. Laindjung is a mythic being represented as Banaidja, a barramundi fish, who emerged from the sea on the eastern coast of Arnhem Land. A range of mythic characters are associated with him; one, Fire, destroyed a ritual shelter where men were assembled for performances; Crocodile, who was among them, was seriously burned.

While the Djanggawul provides the basic creation and conditions for human development, the Laindjung deals with variations on a mythic theme. Or again, the Djanggawul are depicted in human shape, emphasizing the female aspect; they are, above all, providers of the life essence that ensures the continuation of natural species and human beings. The characters in the other cycle are less often portrayed in human form, except for Laindjung-Banaidja, who is able to change his shape. He emphasizes the male component (although there are also female manifestations). He travels across the country and performs rituals, but he is not a creator. Whereas the Djanggawul myth sequences reveal a land resonant with growth and security, the Laindjung-Banaidja provides a view of a potentially dangerous world—where heavy rain and inevitable flooding of the countryside make travel difficult, and where later, when the floodwaters dry up and the grass grows and eventually dries too, fires spread across the land. The supreme danger is expressed in the mythic destruction by fire of the ritual shelter, with the loss of *rangga* and of life.

In the great Wawalag cycle, also a significant mythic and ritual cycle in this region, two sisters in conjunction with Yulunggul, the Great Python, are responsible for the coming of the monsoonal rains. The sisters, however, are not creators; they are only indirectly instrumental in activating a natural phenomenon that, in

turn, fertilizes the land. [*See* Wawalag *and* Yulunggul Snake.] The Djunggawon is an example of a Wawalag ritual which focuses on circumcision. Carved and painted *wangidja* poles, representing the Wawalag, are set up in the main camp. On the secret-sacred ground a triangular cleared space symbolizes the body of Yulunggul. At one end is a hole that is his home and water hole, and there is a special shelter containing a long, decorated drone pipe *(didjeridu).* Novices are painted with ocher designs in the same way as were the mythic Wawalag women, and they are said to represent them. Finally they are taken to the main camp where, screened by a group of men, they are circumcised.

In spite of major sociocultural differences between western and northeastern Arnhem Land, the basic religious themes are similar or complementary. Whereas the Djanggawul came from the east, from the mythical island of Bralgu, their western Arnhem Land counterpart came from the west (from, it is said, the Indonesian islands). Paul Foelsche, prior to 1881, was probably the first person to refer directly to a fertility mother, whom he called Warahmoorungee. Baldwin Spencer (1914, pp. 275–279) called her Imberombera, and since he refers to her in association with the mythic man Wuraka, there is no doubt that he (like Foelsche) was referring to the mother, Waramurungundji, whose husband, Wuragag, was eventually metamorphosed as Tor Rock on the Murganella Plain. Waramurungundji traveled, sometimes with her husband, over the northern coastal area of western Arnhem Land. Wherever she went, she left small pockets of the first people within their own territories; she told them what languages to speak and what rites to perform. Among these ritual constellations is the Ubar, which is substantiated by mythology concerning Nadulmi, or Narol'mi (large male Kangaroo), Yirawadbad (venomous Snake), as well as Waramurungundji (in her Ngalyod, or Rainbow Snake, manifestation).

In the Ubar rituals an elongated, triangular secret-sacred ground represents the body of Ngalyod; within it is a shade or hut and the headstone of Ngalyod. The narrow end of the ground is her tail, and at one side is an extension of the dancing ground—her arm(s). Postulants entering the ground are said to be going into the Mother's womb; novices taken for initiation are "swallowed" by her. During the ritual a hollow log (gong, or drum, which is itself the *ubar*) is beaten; this is the Mother, and the sound is her voice informing people that she is spiritually present at the ground. During the final scenes, in the main camp, men and women dance; in pairs, selected women and men climb a *Pandanus* palm or forked stick to call the sacred invocations (see Berndt and Berndt, 1970, pp. 117–120, pp. 128–132).

Such ritual sequences, while focusing on a bountiful mother goddess, are usually associated with a male mythic counterpart. Although conceptually they differ from the Kunapipi, they certainly have much in common with it, both structurally and ideologically. For example, the eastern Arnhem Land manifestation, while utilizing a basic ritual pattern, provides an interpretative system that relates to local Wawalag mythology. The intrusion of the Kunapipi into western Arnhem Land also draws upon local mythology, in this case a father-son pair named Nagugur. They are mythically responsible for performing, as well as introducing, this ritual to different groups as they traveled across the countryside.

It seems reasonably certain that the original form of the Kunapipi came from the Roper River area in southern Arnhem Land. The old woman or mother, Kunapipi (whose "inside" sacred name is Mumuna, also the name of the bull-roarer used in her rituals and representing the sound of her voice), has two daughters, the Mungamunga. A number of examples of the Kunapipi myth (with considerable variations) and associated rites have been recorded. W. E. H. Stanner (1959–1961), for example, discussing his Port Keats (southwest of Darwin) material, writes of "the Mother of All." In that case her name is Mutjingga (an everyday Murinbata word for "old woman"). As in the Roper River version, she is eventually killed. The relevant ritual concerns the Kalwadi "bull-roarer ceremony" (as Stanner called it; ibid., p. 110). He also discusses the myth of Kunmanggur (the Rainbow Snake; ibid., pp. 234ff.), which has no ritual sequence. This mythic creature is seen as a counterpart of Mutjingga, although mythic interaction between them is minimal. Several parallels can be drawn with Ngalyod in western Arnhem Land.

The Kunapipi constellation can mostly be distinguished, in its movement across the country, by the presence of the Mother and her daughters, the Mungamunga. The primary ritual symbols are a crescent-shaped trench, the *kanala*, in which mythic reenactments take place, especially with reference to natural species; the *nanggaru* depression, or womb; the *yelmalandji* structure, sometimes identified as the Mother and/or Rainbow Snake; and the *djebalmandji*, a shelter constructed on a frame of forked sticks with a horizontal pole, often representing the Mother's womb. [*See* Gadjeri.] In the ritual reenactments, initiated men are said to enter the Mother's womb and, by performing her rituals, to ensure that her power is released to activate all living things. The men emerge from her refreshed and symbolically reborn.

Segmentary systems. A kind of transitional area demarcates the northern fertility mother cults from those

that are more distinctively of the "central" variety. These may be called segmentary because they embrace varying mythic traditions of similar ritual status that are sometimes mythically related but need not be. For example, M. J. Meggitt (1966), in discussing the religious system of the Walbiri, refers to a particular ritual constellation as being the Gadjeri ("old woman," an alternative name for the Kunapipi mother). In the area of which he writes, south of Wave Hill (in the Northern Territory), the Gadjeri rituals are called Big Sunday in English. While they utilize some of the major symbols that are highlighted in the northern versions of the cult, their supporting mythology concerns the two mythic male characters, Mamandabari (either two brothers or a father-son pair). They travel over a large part of Walbiri country, so that no one person would know the whole of the myth. Meggitt points out (ibid., p. 23) a characteristic Western Desert mythology—namely, that by following one myth, one is led to others, which *in toto* form an interconnected pattern. There is separation between myths in terms of content, but multiple ownership of such a constellation is based on the different territories through which the principal characters travel. Meggitt (1966, p. 25) considers that the Gadjeri is an importation, with the Mamandabari providing a rationale that differs considerably from the northern versions.

At Balgo, in southeastern Kimberley, an area contiguous on the southeast and east with the Walbiri and Woneiga, or northern Walbiri, the sociocultural perspective of the Gugadja and Ngadi is typically that of the Western Desert—except that it too has been influenced by the Gadjeri. The religious system is supported by a number of mythic and ritual traditions called Dingari. These are secret-sacred and are associated with various mythic characters, the main ones being the Ganabuda (often equated with the Gadjeri). In these versions, the Ganabuda are a group of women who follow a Dingari ritual group of men who, accompanied by novices, move from one site to another across the country. In their travels they initiate youths and meet other mythic characters who have their own separate traditions.

As preliminaries to the main Dingari ritual, novices, accompanied by their guardians, make a pilgrimage to the main Dingari sites within their own and adjacent territories. While this takes place, cult leaders prepare their secret-sacred *daragu* boards and other emblems. These are incised with designs relating to small sections of the territories over which the Dingari traveled, and they also represent vehicles for the mythic beings to enter during the actual ritual. When the novices return, they are separated from their parents and close kin and

sleep in a special camp not too far from the men's secret-sacred ground. This ground contains a *nanggaru* pit (the womb) and a *ganala (kanala)* crescent trench (both similar to those in the northern Gadjeri). Within these a number of dramatic reenactments of the mythology take place. Novices are brought to the ground with their heads covered; the covering is removed only briefly for them to witness a performance. In some of these sequences, when only fully initiated men are present, arm blood is used as an adhesive for feather-down decoration on the bodies of participants or on emblems, and it is sipped to provide strength and oneness among those men present. In the final rites, novices are placed within the *nanggaru* while firebrands are thrown over them, some of the coals falling on them and burning them. (This is equivalent to Mamandabari rituals mentioned by Meggitt, 1966, p. 71.) Later, parents of the novices present gifts to the men who have initiated them, and a feast precedes the showing of sacred objects. Traditionally, such Dingari performances were accompanied by complementary rituals carried out by women on their own secret-sacred ground. In the past—not now—young girl novitiates had their hymens pierced, and this was regarded as being equivalent to men's subincision.

Clearly, preliminary initiation rites cannot be separated from rituals that are also intended to achieve other things beside ensuring that youths are prepared for their adult religious commitments. While novices are experiencing their own initial exposure to ritual, other men are participating in varying ways, depending on their knowledge and ritual status. Moreover, whenever large rituals are held, participants fall within one of two groups: active workers; and the executives or owners whose right it is to direct proceedings. In the case of circumcision ritual, women and children usually enter or come close to the sacred place, where they may dance. At that time novices are regarded as being ritually dead. On leaving the ground, women and children return to the main camp and the actual circumcision takes place. Afterward, novices are given their first bullroarers *(daragu)* and are anointed with arm blood. Until a youth's subincision, he is traditionally obliged to attend all the rituals (or those sections which are relevant to him at this level). He must learn the songs and the meaning of the ritual performances.

Although the Dingari is known farther south in the Western Desert, its association with the Ganabuda or Gadjeri gradually disappears, and the desert system becomes dominant. While it is useful to separate the western from the eastern side of the desert for particular purposes, mainly because of the complexities of Aranda religion, here both may be regarded as being of desert inspiration. The southwestern and southeastern desert

areas provide a more highly formalized approach to initiation. For instance, around Jigalong (Tonkinson, 1978, pp. 67–80) and for most of the western side of the desert, the mythic beings who dominate the circumcisional scene are the Wadi Gudjara (Two Men) and Wadi Malu (Kangaroo Man), although others may be involved. [*See* Mardudjara Religion.] In the Ooldea area in southwestern South Australia (see Berndt and Berndt, 1945, pp. 89–106), different aspects of initiation ritual concerned several mythic beings, but especially Wadi Gudjara and Wadi Malu. The choice of which mythic reenactments would be revealed ritually to a novice depended on his local descent group.

Given mythological variation, the structure of Western Desert initiation ritual remains reasonably constant. While women wail, youths are taken from their domestic camps to a seclusion area: the removal signifies their ritual death. Arm blood from initiated men is collected in a wooden receptacle, which is then passed around for all, including the novices, to sip from; the residue is smeared over the novices' bodies. This symbolically refers not only to their ritual death but also to their spiritual life. At this time, a novice would have his nasal septum pierced, the middle tooth of the top row loosened and knocked out, and a pattern of scars cut on his back. These three operations probably came into the desert areas through early contact with eastern groups. After a lengthy seclusion period, a novice is tossed into the air and then given a waistband and a pearl-shell necklet. An important part of this sequence is the throwing of firebrands. This occurs near the circumcision ground as women perform a special shuffling dance which repeats the mythic actions of the Minmarara or Gunggaranggara women in the Nyirana-Yulana cycle. As the women, making deep grooves in the earth, reach a row of fires that have been placed near the ground, men throw firebrands at and over them and they retreat to the main camp. This ritual has wide currency throughout the desert and farther north (as in the Walbiri case). The reasons vary. In one mythic account, the Minmarara were frightened of Nyirana's penis. Other explanations revolve around the supposed antagonism between members of the two alternate generation levels that constitute a basic form of social organization throughout the Western Desert. A more likely reason is that women are reacting ritually to the loss and assumed death of their "children" (the novices).

A range of postcircumcisional rites takes place over the next couple of years. They include sacred mythic reenactments in which particular emblems are revealed, together with subincision. This rite is regarded as having major religious significance; only after it is performed can a man participate fully in the secret-

sacred life. The initial act of subincision is relatively informal, and the main focus is on subsequent rites. During the period of seclusion, blood from the incision is sprinkled over the newly subincised youth or man, and this is accompanied by dance and songs from the Wadi Gudjara and the Nyirana-Yulana mythology (see also Tonkinson, 1978, pp. 76–77). Beyond the explanation that it was originally carried out by a particular mythic character and must, therefore, be followed by human beings, subincision has been said to be primarily therapeutic. In areas farther north, men explicitly state that its purpose is to simulate female menstruation, and the periodic ritual opening and enlarging of the incision seems to support this explanation.

Except for the Aranda and affiliated groups, initiatory themes on the eastern side of the desert do not differ markedly from those in the west. Aranda initiation rites include much variation in detail. Spencer and Gillen (1938, pp. 212–270) reported five basic divisions: tossing of the novice, circumcision, head biting, subincision, and fire ritual. These agree for the most part with information from Strehlow (1947, pp. 96–100). Events commence on the *pulla* secret-sacred ground, where both circumcision and subincision take place. On this ground a novice is introduced to some of the ritual of his group and, after circumcision, receives a bull-roarer. During his subsequent seclusion, he must swing this to warn noninitiated persons of his presence. Generally, during this period he is instructed in the appropriate myths and witnesses relevant rites. In one part of the sequence, men bite the initiand's head so that blood flows, although (as Strehlow points out: ibid., p. 99) the scalp is first opened with a sharp stick. The aim is allegedly to ensure a strong growth of hair. Subincision follows and is accompanied by mythic reenactments. Just prior to the actual subincision, men embrace decorated *tnatantja* poles that represent the mythic Bandicoot. When a youth is seized for the operation, certain women cicatrize themselves in the main camp; the marks are said to represent the incised designs on a *tjurunga*. Women dance as the men return to the main camp, and the undecorated, newly subincised youth is presented to them, then disappears rapidly into the bush. The next morning he is led to a group of dancing women who hold wooden dishes. He holds a shield before his face and the women throw their dishes at this. Then they press their hands on his shoulders and rub their faces on his back, taking the opportunity to cut off locks of his hair, which they later incorporate in the hair-string ornaments they wear.

Spencer and Gillen (1938, pp. 271–386) and Strehlow (1947, pp. 100–119) regard the Ingkura rituals as an integral part of initiation. However, they appear to be

closely similar in content to the Intichiuma (Inditji-wuma) increase (species-renewal) rituals. The Ingkura consisted of extensions and elaborations of various mythic cycles which purported to amplify religious experience. On the Ingkura ground, initiated youths were instructed in the myths and songs of their own local group, *tjurunga* were exhibited and explained to them, and decorated poles were erected near a sacred earth mound but were finally uprooted and used in dancing. All such objects were vehicles for specific mythic beings whose presence at the Ingkura was necessary for the desired power to be released and to contribute to the well-being of the society. Youths going through the Ingkura were "driven" toward the women, who had assembled in a clearing. The women responded by throwing fire-brands, while men swung bull-roarers. Toward the end of this ritual sequence, a large secret-sacred emblem consisting of two large wooden *tjurunga*s of great power was taken to where the women had assembled. As the men came close to the women, they lowered the emblem and covered it completely with their bodies. The reason for this lies in the mythology where, in the Dreaming, spirit women carried such *tjurunga*s. Apart from this example, the interaction of men and women in the Ingkura emphasized the complementary nature of such religious activities; both men and women were actively involved.

The desert focus is on particular Dreaming tracks made by the deities during their extensive travels across the land. Members of local descent groups associated with sections of such tracks are in a position to perform the relevant rituals and pass on their knowledge to others. Mythic knowledge is consequently fragmented ritually. In the past, it was not possible or practical to bring together all local sections of one particular myth cycle for a total dramatic performance. This state of affairs has several important implications. It emphasizes the localization of religion in the desert, where within any one region an overview or a total religious perspective could not be achieved through observation—as, broadly speaking, it could be in the big ritual constellations of the northern areas. In the desert, one particular myth is likely to be known, or known about, at the level of intellectual understanding over a very wide region; a large number of persons may recognize its significance even though they may never meet for the actual performances. The wide range of spatially extensive myths, dispersed among culturally similar people, reveals differing approaches to basic themes—for example, in regard to initiation and species-renewal ritual. One further feature concerns people's mythic and ritual (and personal) identification with specifically noted stretches of country. The deities, although shape-

changing, are also virtually manifestations and expressions of local areas. They may be defined partly in relation to those areas.

Despite the issue of segmentation, two aspects draw people together into a religious bond, even though that bond may be a distant one. The first is cooperation within the ritual sphere, where owners of a myth cycle receive direct aid from other persons in the performance of the associated rites. This is a constantly sustaining feature. The other is that secret-sacred boards and relics that are symbolic representations of mythic beings are moved about the desert from one group to another, substantiating the concept of a community of common interests and faith.

Aranda religion is more formalized but still segmented. It too was heavily oriented in terms of particular local groups, each represented by a mythic father-son pair (Strehlow, 1947, pp. 7–8, in relation to the Bandicoot named Karora). Strehlow (1947, p. 25) notes that the northern Aranda, particularly, were a "strongly patrilineal society" in which the people prided themselves on the belief that they and their forefathers had all "come into being from the primal *tnatantja*" (a ritual pole with life-containing properties).

Over and above the large ritual sequences held in particular territories, concentrating on the recreation of the original mythic scenes, special "increase" rites were intended to ensure a plentiful supply of the appropriate species represented by the local guardian deity: for instance, the well-known Witchetty Grub center at Emily Gap (near Alice Springs). The ritual associated with this site is secret-sacred. Such localized rites for species-renewal purposes are common throughout the desert and Aranda areas. Some include the making of elaborate ground designs which represent topographically, in a conventionalized form, the country associated with a particular mythic being; they are obliterated at the conclusion of the ritual.

Mythic sites are, everywhere, a salient focus in Aboriginal religion. In the Western Desert they loom more obviously, and because sections of a particular myth are in the hands of small local groups, they tend, to a greater degree perhaps than in the north, to be more significant ritually. At the same time, such sites are visible manifestations of the "reality" of what took place in the Dreaming, a reality that is transformed into ritual and, in turn, directed toward everyday living and needs. In all of these desert areas too, *tjurunga*-like objects are material representations of deities, who are a source of power that can be activated through ritual. Even though the desert region as a whole is heavily oriented in patrilineal terms, virtually all ritual concerned the participation of men and women in one way or an-

other. Physical separation was counterbalanced by commonly held beliefs, even though their expressions varied, and in nearly all ritual sequences both men and women were expected to cooperate in accordance with traditionally established rules.

Focus on deity. Information on eastern and southeastern Australia includes two significant key points. One is the reference to dominant deities of All-Father type or as equivalent to a high god. Their categorization in those terms ignores associated descriptions, but there is no doubt that using such labels for an outstanding mythic being has its own appeal. A. W. Howitt (1904, p. 507), for instance, writes of Baiame (Baiamban) as being the "master in the sky-country" and as *mamingata*, "our father." [*See* All-Father.] Howitt (1904, pp. 509–642) remains the best source for traditional material on this area, although Edward M. Curr (1886–1887) and R. Brough Smyth (1878), among others, are almost equally useful.

Typical of what are usually called Bora rituals was the Guringal (Kuringal) of the Yuin (south of Sydney). The Guringal took place on a specially prepared ground where a number of objects had been assembled: for instance, a spiny anteater made of earth with protruding sticks as quills, a molded brown snake of clay, and a figure of Daramulun (the mythic deity) made of earth and surrounded by implements and weapons. With these were exhibited magical substances. This is the second key point. Aboriginal "doctors" or "clever men" played a major part in the rituals; during the initiation rites, where tooth evulsion was the primary operation, novices witnessed some of their activities. These included disgorging quartz crystals and other substances symbolizing their power. Novices were also taken to see a large figure of Daramulun incised on a tree trunk. Before this image, decorated men danced toward the novices who, one by one, had a couple of teeth loosened with a succession of blows and finally removed by a doctor. Novices were then taken to stand before the figure of Daramulun and told of his power and that he lived beyond the sky and watched what people did. A number of ritual dances followed, among them some related to the mother (or two mothers) of this deity, and there were others that reproduced the behavior of certain natural species. During the final part of the Guringal, a grave was prepared. Within it a Yuin man, said to represent Daramulun, lay covered with branches and leaves and with a small tree, the roots resting on his chest. The novices were then placed alongside the grave. To the accompaniment of songs and the actions of the doctors, the supposedly dead person would rise and perform a magical dance within the grave, holding

his magical substances in his mouth. Finally, the grave was covered up.

The contrast between southeastern Bora and rituals of other areas lies mainly in the emphasis on one deity, represented by an image of earth, clay, or as an incised figure on a tree. These were evidently comparable or equivalent to the emblematic poles, posts, wooden boards, and stone *tjurunga*s of desert and northern groups and intended as vehicles for the deity to inhabit temporarily. A close inspection of Bora material suggests that other mythic beings were also present (as among the Wuradjeri of western New South Wales), as well as in the Guringal, where performances related to differing natural species. However, the aspect of species renewal is not directly mentioned. A further contrast lies in the presence of clever men and in the magical component of many of these rituals. Wuradjeri evidence suggests that such performances extended over several years, that clever men received their power from Daramulun, and that the "mother of Daramulun" (mentioned in the Guringal) was Emu (categorized as his wife, among the Wuradjeri). In my *Australian Aboriginal Religion* (1974, fasc. 1, p. 29), I note that much of southeastern ritual was preoccupied with the hereafter and with achieving identification with the deity Daramulun (or Baiame). Moreover, spirits of the dead played an important part. For instance, the grave scene in the Guringal (although it could certainly be interpreted in other terms) was possibly intended to symbolize the common initiation theme of death with subsequent rebirth.

The southeastern sector of Queensland is characterized by rituals that in some respects resemble the Bora, although there are marked differences. For instance, the training of novices in fishing, hunting, and fighting proficiency and the bestowal on novices of power-endowed names were emphasized. It would seem that fighting was a cultural focus (Howitt, 1904, pp. 595–599); this is almost the only reference in the literature on Aboriginal Australia where fighting is included as part of an initiation sequence. Of course, fighting per se is not excluded from Aboriginal religious mythology, where it appears as a normal aspect of social living. In northeastern Arnhem Land, for example, highly conventionalized fighting to resolve grievances contained ritualistic dancing associated with various aspects of local religion.

Transformation of ancestors. The major sources of information on transformation of ancestors are works by Ursula H. McConnel (1957) and by Lauriston Sharp (1934, pp. 19–42); both works concern Cape York Peninsula. The religion of this area focused on patrilineal

clan territories containing *auwa* sites, or water holes. Near them live particular creatures in spirit form (which have been called "totemic" or, in this case, *pulwaiya*), and it is to these *auwa* that the spirits of the dead are said to go. As McConnel (1957, p. 171) puts it, the landowners approach the *auwa* of their *pulwaiya* with respect and affection. The rites performed there to ensure the spiritual renewal of the respresentative species differ from one *auwa* to the next; however, it is to spirits of the dead (of the past), identified with the *pulwaiya*, that invocations are addressed. Also, the *pulwaiya* are associated with a wide range of myths. There are male and female *auwa* with spirit children awaiting rebirth through the performance of the appropriate ritual by a woman who has conceived.

The merging of the ancestors with specifically identified mythic beings in their species form is a special local manifestation. While such interpretations can be made elsewhere in Aboriginal Australia, their uniqueness lies in the way the linkage is made. On the other hand, the *auwa* closely resemble the increase centers of central Australia and the Western Desert. The segmentary nature of these ritual constellations is exemplified in initiation, which is focused on a particular *auwa* (that is, the *auwa* of a particular novice). For example, in the Wolkolan (Bony Bream) sequence, the first rite concerns the "awakening" of its spirit *(pulwaiya)*, the dancing of the male Bream, and the appearance of a female Bream, both impaled with spears. They stand together in sexual union, as participants call for a plentiful supply of this fish—so that their death through hunting is clearly indicated, as well as their potential fertility.

In contrast to ritual connected with *auwa* are the initiation rites discussed by Thomson (1933, pp. 461–489). These concern a culture hero (that is, a mythic being). A secret-sacred area is protected by screens, behind which sacred objects are prepared and stored in readiness for dancing sequences. There are a large number of dances, and in some, actors use masks. Many of the myths associated with these dances are connected with the Torres Strait Islands and the mainland of Papua New Guinea. However, some of the *auwa* dances suggest possible linkages with Arnhem Land.

Variations on a common theme. The Lake Eyre basin (in northeastern South Australia) is best represented by the Dieri, with information derived largely from the early work of Samuel Gason (1874) and Howitt (1904). In many respects the Dieri were culturally close to Western Desert people, especially in their variety of mythic beings, which were referred to as *muramura*. [See Muramura Darana.] Each deity was associated with a particular ritual sequence. Like their counterparts in other areas, they were metamorphosed into stones or other natural features at specific sites where their spirits remain. Some were regarded as creative. For example, one Dieri myth tells how the *mardu* (a natural species spirit, regarded as a person's own flesh from his or her mother) came into being. They emerged from the earth as natural species (crow, parakeet, emu, etc.), but at that stage they were physically incomplete. They became whole by remaining in the sun, when they stood up as human beings and then scattered over the country. In another myth the Mandra-mankana, a mythic man, swallowed a large number of people. However, some escaped. Helped by the *muramura* Kantayulkana ("grass swallower"), they ran off in various directions in the form of natural species (becoming *mardu*).

The actual localities of these beings were traditionally indicated by wooden guide posts called *toa*. The designs carved or printed on these showed topographic features relevant to particular *muramura* or to their mythic adventures, and in this respect they were similar in intent to the incised *tjurunga* of the desert. As in the desert, too, where novices were first circumcised by the use of a firestick, the Dieri tell of two *muramura* Kadri-pariwilpa-ulu (Milky Way) who showed the Dieri how to circumcise by using a stone knife. The main initiation rite was the *wilyaru*, which followed circumcision. This involved cicatrization, and it was at this time that a novice received a bull-roarer. Apart from their connection with the *muramura*, bull-roarers were believed to possess a power that enabled men to be good hunters.

By far the most important of the postinitiatory rites was the Mindari, which normally followed the Wilyaru. Sponsored by the *muramura* Emu, this was probably the most sacred of all Dieri rituals. A large flattened mound was made and decorated with feathers and red ocher, representing Emu's body. Two women would walk across it to the accompaniment of singing, and as the mound was broken up, invocations were called to persuade emus to breed. Women were also sent as messengers to invite members of neighboring groups to attend the Mindari. Although the concept of a dominant mythic character was not relevant to the Dieri and their neighbors, there are particular features of the Mindari which suggest association with the Emu of the southeastern Australian Bora ritual. In a sense, the Dieri, while retaining their distinctive cultural heritage, were influenced from both the west and the east, and also from the northeast as far as the Molonga rituals were concerned (see Roth, 1897, pp. 120–125).

Dieri influences extended farther south, but not along the lower Murray River and the Lakes district, or on the Adelaide plains. Most of the literature relating to the "Narrinyeri" comes from early writers (for example, Taplin in Woods, 1879), supplemented later by Norman Tindale and by my own studies. There seems to have been more or less equal participation of women and men in ritual life, with a minimal division of labor between them in social activities. Song and dance sequences covered a wide range of subjects: natural species, food collecting and hunting, sickness prevention, and so on, and some songs provided sketches of current events. The major mythic being (deity) was Ngurunderi, who appears only in human form. In a bark canoe, he chased the great Murray Cod down the Murray River, and as it swished its tail from side to side it formed the river's bends and swamps. He was also responsible for setting in train all religious rites; wherever he traveled and camped or wherever some important event took place, part of his sacred essence remained. While these were sacred sites, they were not the subject of ritual or regarded as species-renewal places. However, there are indications that special rites took place, with Ngurunderi as the main focus—especially his going into the sky to enter the spirit world. The fact that Ngurunderi came from the upper reaches of the Murray suggests that he is associated with the Baiame/Daramulun tradition. In contrast to other areas, Yaraldi (as one language group within the Narrinyeri grouping) men and women possessed spirit familiars or protectors who indirectly referred to mythic beings.

One clue to the religious life of the lower Murray River lies in the concept of *narumba*, a term meaning "sacred" or "taboo." Initiation rites involved depilation of facial hair and observation of a wide range of food taboos; during his period of segregation, a novice was himself *narumba*.

In many respects, the cultures of southwestern Western Australia (now referred to as Nyungar) roughly paralleled those of the lower Murray River in South Australia. Many Nyungar myths told of beings associated with sacred sites. One of the most important was Waugal (a Rainbow Snake), who was responsible for shaping parts of the land and the rivers. Another, Motogen, was said to be a male creative being. There were a number of dance and song sequences, many of which dramatized birds, animals, reptiles, and so on, along with hunting scenes and the feats of clever men. The internal organization of Nyungar groups included clan divisions with totemic associations; in some cases mythic beings were correlated with particular territories and were the focus of ritual. Like the lower Murray River people in South Australia and the southeastern Australian groups,

the Nyungar did not practice circumcision, and women had a major stake in community and ritual life.

On the northern side of the continent, Bathurst and Melville islanders culturally resemble, in some respects, the people who lived on the lower Murray River. There is, for instance, no physical operation at initiation except depilation, and they make no major distinctions on the basis of sex in religious matters. The Kulama ritual, first described by Spencer (1914, pp. 91–115), and later by Charles W. M. Hart and Arnold R. Pilling (1960, pp. 93–95), among others, is particularly important. Its mythology involves several beings, among them the White-headed Sea Eagle and the Owl, and its rites are organized by initiated men who enter a state of *pukamani* (which signifies sacredness and taboo). The *kulama* is a dangerous but sacred plant, which produces yams that need to be processed before being eaten. At the appropriate season, the yams are collected and cooked in ovens. Then they are cut up and rubbed on the bodies of men, women, and children; some are mashed up with red ocher and the resultant substance rubbed into men's hair. This is believed to prevent sickness. The yam symbolizes a range of natural phenomena, some of which are explicitly mentioned in the songs and accompanying dances. The power inherent in the Kulama triggers off the monsoonal period and stimulates all growth, but it is also said to control the rain and prevent flooding. In other words, the Kulama, through the special ritual approach to it, safeguards the welfare of the community.

There is some evidence that this particular culture was not restricted to Bathurst and Melville islands but extended on to the mainland, especially into parts of western Arnhem Land where the traditional Mangindjeg ritual (also focusing on an edible root) paralleled the Kulama in certain respects. As we have seen, one important feature which links northern Australian religion is the fertility mother concept. On Bathurst and Melville islands, traditionally, earth mothers were identified as being responsible for creating human and other natural species. Four of the five phratries that are recognized as social categories there are named after earth mothers who introduced that form of social organization. Among the Laragia (Larrakia) of Darwin, and the Daly River people to the southwest, circular stone structures were built to represent the wombs of their creative mothers.

In contrast to Bathurst and Melville islands and the lower Murray River, where religious life is, or was, relatively open insofar as men and women are concerned, Groote Eylandt culture (on the eastern side of Arnhem Land) traditionally offered a somewhat extreme case of sexual dichotomy in religious affairs. However, that

area has been heavily influenced by mainland (northeastern Arnhem Land) religion and emphasizes mortuary ritual designed to transfer a dead person's spirit to the appropriate land of the dead. Subsequently, a lock of the deceased person's hair was ritually put into a small spirit bag and kept for a number of years until it was finally returned to that person's own territory, where it was buried. There were also additional mortuary rites for important persons, which resembled the *nara* rituals of northeastern Arnhem Land and in which most of the dramatic enactments were secret-sacred and included the use of sacred objects.

Among other localized religious types, the Wandjina are probably the best known. [*See* Wandjina.] Widely spread in the northwest Kimberley of Western Australia, their graphic representations appear in cave and rock-shelter paintings. These depict male and female mythic beings, some of which are Rainbow Snakes, and in their cloud form they herald the onset of the monsoonal season. The beings are creative and associated with spirit children who convey to pregnant women the life force possessed by the Wandjina, and they are responsible for activating a number of natural species. The basic rite connected with such paintings, intended to renew species and their environment, calls for retouching the designs and singing. This region has been influenced by the spread of cults from the Northern Territory which have been expanding for a considerable period of time, probably long before the first European settlement. For instance, Gurangara (Kurangara) ritual (a segment of the Kunapipi) is known and performed over much of the northern Kimberley. [*See* Ungarinyin Religion.]

Diversified Patterns, Common Aims. One of the problems facing students of Aboriginal religion has been the very real issue of differing cultural patterning, which has often obscured what is considered to be an essential commonality of religious purpose in relation to basic belief and what is intended to be achieved. When comparisons are drawn between regional manifestations, much depends on what criteria are distinguished and how differences and similarities are correlated, as well as delineated. In considering regional patterns of, for example, initiation, it should be apparent that, in spite of local developments (where differing physical operations are selected, along with differing mythological substantiation), a general configuration can easily be discerned, and not entirely in relation to ritual structuring. Where the large religious systems are concerned, their detail, as well as their specific emphases, provide not so much a basic similarity as an indication that (if an agreed-upon analytic approach is accepted) members of particular sociocultural groups have sought

varying solutions to explain fundamental issues which have interested not only them but virtually all Aborigines as well.

The patterns that have been presented here are by no means complete; there are others. However, their selection has been made mainly on the basis of contrasts between them, as well as what they have to offer in explanatory terms. For example, what have been called "adaptive mobile systems" have not only a wide spatial relevance; they are also easily distinguishable in relation to a bountiful (but sometimes dangerous) mother figure who—usually but not always operating with a male counterpart—dominates the ritual scene. The movement of such cults over wide stretches of country is far from unique in Aboriginal Australia. What distinguishes these constellations (for example, the Kunapipi, Gadjeri, and so on) is the ease with which they adapt to localized systems as well as the way they clarify such aspects as the power of a deity and how the life essence is released to ensure the continuance of the status quo for nature as for human beings and for the deities themselves.

The segmentary systems, on the other hand, refer to compartmentalization of extensive mythic and ritual cycles, the details of which are held by members of a number of local descent groups who may or may not live near each other. Each group is traditionally responsible for sustaining part of the total corpus of knowledge relevant to a particular mythic being and his or her travels in the Dreaming. There are major differences in structure between these and the adaptive mobile systems (as they are described here). The Western Desert examples are, of course, mobile but require (except in the Walbiri case) no adaptation. Each segment is a reflection or microcosm of the whole but is not complete in itself. The adaptive mobile systems, on the other hand, always appear to be complete in themselves, no matter what adjustments are made to accommodate local manifestations.

The Bora is distinctive, though not so much because of the attention that has been placed on a lone deity (since in other areas outstanding characters are given prominence). Rather, its uniqueness lies in two directions. One is the pervasive influence of magic in a way which does not occur in other Aboriginal religions. It is not particularly easy to offer an explanation of why this is so—except that the magical substances are manipulated by Aboriginal doctors mostly to ensure the release of life-producing power (that is, the same aim, but a different means of accomplishing it). The other feature is the removal of the deity (in spite of the creation of his image and the images of those associated with him in the ritual context) from intimate contact with ritual

postulants. Certainly, he is present on the ritual ground, but he is aloof from human affairs and, moreover, the Dreaming world of the deity is more distinctly demarcated than is usual in the rest of Aboriginal Australia.

Spirits of the dead had a role to play in the Bora; but turning to the Cape York Peninsula area, we find that role is elaborated in respect of the *auwa* sites. In both cases, the intention is to transform postulants or newly dead persons into becoming representatives of, or identified with, particular mythic beings, or to merge them into the Dreaming. In comparing the ideologies of these groups with those of others discussed here, we can see that while processes differ, the aims are similar. In a sense, the *auwa* bring us back to the Dieri system, at least in part. Its religious system has been influenced by external cultures, but it apparently had no difficulty in retaining its distinctive patterning—even though it suggests close similarities to Western Desert religion.

Territorially peripheral, but no less significant, are the systems of the Murray River (South Australia) and Melville and Bathurst islands (with area extensions). While these two cultures are almost as far apart spatially as they could be, there are striking parallels between them in their initiations and highly structured taboo systems. At the same time, they differ radically in regard to the dominance of male or female deities. These two areas also provide examples of equality between males and females in ritual affairs, with virtually no secret-sacred dimension for either sex. At the other extreme, on Groote Eylandt, it would appear that women traditionally had no place in male-dominated religious activities. These examples differ from nearly all other religious systems, where male-female complementarity is the norm. The Wandjina, however, combine elements which resemble Western Desert emphases on species-renewal sites, with the theme (although with a differing content) of seasonal renewal presented in the broad way that the adaptive mobile systems approach it.

Continuing Significance of Aboriginal Religion. Mainstream Aboriginal religion today takes two basic forms. Although modified through non-Aboriginal contact, Aboriginal religion still displays its own traditional orientations. Not all of the religious systems discussed in this contribution are now living realities. The religions of people who originally occupied the southwest of Western Australia, the Lake Eyre basin, the lower Murray River, New South Wales, Victoria, and southwest Queensland have all but disappeared. Two dominant mainstream religions remain, in general terms, in the northern coastal and the central desert regions. In the northern example, the fertility cults have traveled far across the Northern Territory to the edges of the West-

ern Desert and proved sufficiently attractive, at least in border areas, to influence the distinctive desert form. The creative mother, usually present in conjunction with a male deity, is a major focus of mythic and ritual activity, either as a pivotal personage or seen in relation to other characters. Moreover, such cults have been sufficiently resilient to maintain their key identifying symbols through the vicissitudes of cultural differences. They are essentially flexible, adaptive, and responsive to changing circumstances.

In the Western Desert, the mythic and ritual constellations are probably almost as spatially extensive as the northern example, but they are different in structure, since a number of equally significant mythic and ritual traditions crisscross the whole of the desert region. Of course, this is also the case with the northern variety. In the case of the desert, there is no single coordinating theme; instead, the theme is manifested in a number of similar forms relating to differing mythic occurrences. In the desert, too, male deities predominate, although there is no lack of female mythic representation. Also, an additional contrast can be drawn. In the northern area, the physical aspect of procreation is emphasized, even though the spiritual component is present; in the desert, the spiritual aspects receive more attention. The reasons are not clear, but they may have something to do with the varying roles of women in relation to the two mainstream religious expressions. In both examples, the secret-sacred domain of men is similarly stressed. In the northern coastal region women do not usually have their own secret-sacred domain, although they do in the central-western northern area. In the desert, women usually have their own rituals, which are physically separate from (although mythically coordinated with) those of the men. In both regions men and women come together for the performances of some sections of the major ritual cycles. Nevertheless, in comparing these two mainstream religious perspectives, it is clear that they have much in common—in relation to aims and aspirations as well as in the views that are expressed on the place of human beings in nature and vis-à-vis their deities.

Non-Aboriginal influences, including missionary activities, have made some drastic inroads, but where traditional Aboriginal culture has survived it remains defined in terms of its members' commitment to the indigenous religious form. This was the case in the past, and is so today, particularly insofar as the two mainstream religious constellations are concerned. Secularization has been accelerating in many Australian Aboriginal areas, which means that many persons of Aboriginal descent are moving away from traditional belief or simply paying lip service to it. Nevertheless,

there is also a counterbalancing trend. The 1970s and 1980s have seen a religious renaissance, which has taken a number of forms. It is one consequence of an upsurge of interest on the part of Aborigines in their unique identity vis-à-vis the wider Australian society. A contributing factor has been the attempt by governments (both federal and state) to implement more enlightened policies in regard to Aborigines. Not least, there has been a growing interest in the Aboriginal land-rights platform, which basically depends on the linkage of Aboriginal persons and groups to specific land defined in religious terms.

These developments emphasize the resilience of traditional religion, not only in more conspicuous survival zones, but also in many peripheral areas where some of the traditional background has continued to be a part of the background of social life. This is because the traditional religion continues to meet, in some measure, emotional and practical needs *and* political aspirations. Within the two main surviving regional spreads, some innovative religious movements have emerged. [*See the article on* Modern Movements, *below.*] These have incorporated alien elements within a traditonal setting and in the presence of continuing traditional religious forms.

This traditional resilience is of particular significance. It is not due solely to the persistence of factors reinforcing or enhancing personal and social identity or to the use of religious knowledge to justify land claims. More particularly, it rests on two features which seem to have characterized all Aboriginal religions. One is their seeming conservatism. The other is their ability to allow room for varying interpretations, provided certain basic values are not impaired. There is a degree of flexibility in Aboriginal religion that permits coordination with changing circumstances.

Traditionally, Aboriginal religion reflected the variable concerns of people in everyday living. It focused on social relations, on the crises of human existence, and on practical matters of survival. While a division had to be made between the quick and the dead, that division was essentially an artificial one. The Dreaming provided an overarching conceptual model that postulated a life eternal and offered a belief in a spiritual force that took precedence over material trappings—but, in doing so, kept the physical attributes of life in positive perspective.

The core of this view consisted of the essential renewability or reactivation of the essence we call life. Behind the secret-sacred emblems and the relevant ritual performances are the deities themselves, who in their different ways are not only the symbols but the source and the possessors of that most sacred power of all—the power of life, which they may bestow or withhold. In one sense this power is within the grasp of human beings, but in another it remains outside it. Provided, then, that the deities continue to hold that power, and that human beings are in a position to ensure that it is conveyed into the dimension of ordinary everyday living, the divine plan of a life everlasting is maintained.

[*In addition to several of the articles cited in the text above,* Ngukurr Religion *provides a detailed examination of the religious life of a specific Aboriginal group.*]

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Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. *Structure and Function in Primitive Society.* London, 1952. In this volume of collected essays, chapters 6 and 8 (originally published earlier as separate journal articles) concern Aboriginal religion. They have been critically examined by Lévi-Strauss and Eliade, among others, and continue to be of theoretical interest.

Roth, Walter Edmund. *Ethnological Studies among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines.* Brisbane, 1897. One of the major earlier sourcebooks for the ethnography of Aboriginal groups in northwest-central Queensland. Although essential in any attempt to reconstruct the traditional past of that region, much of it is unsystematic and incomplete.

Schmidt, Wilhelm. *Der Ursprung der Göttesidee.* 12 vols. Münster, 1912–1955. Schmidt's monumental work has, unfortunately, not attracted the attention it deserves (especially in relation to the first and third volumes, the latter being on southeastern Australia). The best recent assessment is by Eliade (1973).

Sharp, Lauriston. "Ritual Life and Economics of the Yir-Yoront of Cape York Peninsula." *Oceania* (1934): 19–42. This small contribution, based on field research, supplements the work of McConnel (1957).

Smyth, R. Brough. *The Aborigines of Victoria.* 2 vols. Melbourne, 1878. As an ethnographic source book this is, like Curr's, a valuable source of information on traditional Aboriginal material that has long since disappeared as a living reality.

Spencer, Baldwin. *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory of Australia* (1914). Oosterhout, 1966. Also a valuable sourcebook for and about northern Aboriginal people. It is less detailed than Baldwin's Aranda studies, but provides information on a number of northern cultures that have changed radically in recent years.

Spencer, Baldwin, and F. J. Gillen. *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (1899). London, 1938. This classic study remains a basic source of information for and about the Aranda and adjacent groups. It contains a great deal of descriptive material on ritual and religious belief, which Durkheim (1915) used in his general study of religion.

Stanner, W. E. H. "On Aboriginal Religion." *Oceania* 30 (1959): 108–127, 245–278; 31 (1960): 100–120, 233–255; 32 (1961): 79–108; 33 (1962): 239–273; 34 (1963): 56–58. Relying heavily on the methodological approaches of Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown, Stanner used his detailed study of the Port Keats mytho-ritual version of the Old Mother cult to outline a theoretical basis for the examination of Aboriginal religion. It is historically important.

Strehlow, Carl. *Die Aranda-und-Loritja-Stämme in zentral Aus-

tralien. 5 vols. in 7. Frankfurt, 1907–1920. A detailed account by this nineteenth-century Lutheran missionary, father of T. G. H. Strehlow, who was able to use and build upon this material in his own later research.

Strehlow, T. G. H. *Aranda Traditions.* Melbourne, 1947. Following on the work of his father, Strehlow concentrated on the Aranda concept of *tjurunga* in relation to a detailed analysis of myth and ritual. There are salient differences between his approach and that of Spencer (1899).

Strehlow, T. G. H. *Songs of Central Australia.* Sydney, 1971. An outstanding contribution to the study of Aranda religious songs, including detailed analysis of the vernacular and translated versions. The attempt to set them in a comparative framework is less significant than the examples and discussion of Aranda material as such.

Taplin, George. *The Narrinyeri.* Adelaide, 1873. This work also appears in *The Native Tribes of South Australia,* edited by J. D. Woods (Adelaide, 1879), pp. 1–156. A missionary's account of Aborigines of the lower Murray River in South Australia. Despite its evident bias against the traditional culture, it is virtually the only early source available on these Aborigines.

Thomson, Donald F. "The Hero Cult: Initiation and Totemism on Cape York." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 63 (1933): 453–537. Demonstrates the influence of religious cults of the Torres Strait Islands on the northern Cape York Aboriginal people.

Tonkinson, Robert. *The Mardudjara Aborigines: Living the Dream in Australia's Desert.* New York, 1978. Tonkinson's study complements those of Meggitt (1962) and Berndt (1945) in other parts of the Western Desert and is essential for an overview of that region. Chapters 1, 4, 5, and 6 are directly relevant to the religious dimension of Mardudjara culture.

Warner, Wiliam Lloyd. *A Black Civilization: A Study of an Australian Tribe* (1937). New York, 1958. The first detailed study of one traditional Aboriginal culture. Chapters 8–13 focus on various aspects of magic and religion; the great Wawalag and Djanggawul (Djanggau) mytho-ritual cycles are discussed, analyzed, and interpreted. Heavily influenced by Durkheim, Warner's views about the place of women in Aboriginal religion, including the sacred-profane dichotomy, distorted his ethnographic reporting in this respect and (as he later admitted) require reassessment.

RONALD M. BERNDT

Mythic Themes

In the positive sense myth is a charter for and a guide to action, though not necessarily socially approved action. Although myth is not always linked directly to religious ritual, the most important myths usually have a two-way, mutually supportive relationship with ritual. A myth may stipulate, explain, or describe a rite or outline a sequence of events that, when translated into ritual action, emphasizes different facets of its mythic counterpart.

As nonliterate peoples, the Aborigines relied almost entirely on oral transmission. Other modes of communication were supplementary and, like spoken languages and dialects, regionally based: hand-sign vocabularies, material representations, body markings, ritual and ceremonial posturing and dance, and gestures and facial expressions. These, like myth, illustrate the crisscrossing of similarity and diversity in traditional Aboriginal culture throughout the continent, as well as the balance between local and outward-looking orientations.

Mythic characters were usually associated with specific sites in the territories of specific groups. They mediated and personalized the relationship between people and the land. But most mythic beings were travelers, not confined to single regions, and however much of their spiritual essence they left behind at sites which now commemorate them, their mythic tracks led outward as well as inward. Along with trade and gift exchanges, which connected persons and groups beyond the ordinary range of social interaction, the mythic beings encouraged a centrifugal perspective, actualized in meetings for religious rituals that focused on the appropriate mythic characters, their sites and tracks, and their sayings, songs, and deeds.

Aboriginal societies were based on religion. Religious rules, authority, and sanctions were dominant, permeating the whole of living and ranging from the highly concentrated secret-sacred dimension through the dimension of the open sacred, or public sacred, to more routine mundane affairs. In themes and in modes of transmission, and in their ritual associations, myths in all regions reflect that span and that coverage.

Sacred Context of Everyday Life. Many myths contain primary or secondary themes that have a practical bearing on issues of everyday life. These are sometimes regarded as too mundane or too localized to be put in the same category as more obviously sacred myths with potentially universal appeal. Nevertheless, they are set firmly within a religious frame.

Essentially practical and down-to-earth, Aboriginal religion put almost equal importance on human physical well-being and on spiritual matters or nonempirical aspirations. Many religious rites, large and small, were directed to human goals. For example, a multitude of species-renewal rites, performed by different persons or groups at different times and places, tried to ensure that people had enough of all the resources they regarded as necessary for living in their particular area. The rites were designed to achieve through religious means aims that were, in one sense, mundane. And myths were vital

ingredients in this process. Mythic characters were responsible for contributing the different "necessities for living"; they also sanctified and sponsored locally available assets by simply using them themselves. Myths, then, were and are storehouses of practical information, rules, and precepts, as well as a source of divine truths.

Some mythic characters created supplies of food or water that had not been there before. For example, the Djanggawul sisters in eastern Arnhem Land urinated to provide fresh water for the local human populations. [See Djanggawul.] Several of these waters were so powerfully sacred that access to them was restricted. The Djanggawul also caused trees to grow from their posts, called *djuda*, but in western Arnhem Land a high proportion of mythic characters are credited with actually "planting" a wide range of vegetation. Sometimes they carried vegetables or fish in long baskets and "poured them out" in what seemed appropriate places. Others, such as one of the many mythic sister pairs who traveled throughout Arnhem Land, shaped goannas and lizards, put them among red ants that bit them into life, then struck them on the head with a spear-thrower to make them move and spread across the land. Still other characters turned into various vegetable foods or into fresh and edible land creatures. An old potential water-peanut man ended his journey (during which he planted many foods) in a billabong near the East Alligator River, where he gradually changed into a water peanut and with his last words urged the people of that region to gather and eat him in his food manifestation.

In a Dieri myth from the Lake Eyre region, one of the *muramura* used songs to make both bitter and pleasant-tasting plants grow. (Howitt, 1904, p. 781). T. G. H. Strehlow, in the narrative myth of Emianga in central Australia, sets out details of edible seed preparation (see below). Ngurunderi, the great mythic personage of the lower Murray River in South Australia, took a fish—a Murray cod—caught by his wives' brother Nepeli in a giant *pondi*, cut it into pieces, and threw the pieces into the river and into the lakes at the river's mouth. As he did so, he named each piece as a different variety of fish, making the waters rich in fish for the human beings who were to come.

On Cape York Peninsula, Hard Yam Woman and Arrowroot Man, descending into their respective sacred sites, took on the shape of roots and uttered instructions on how they should be treated to render them edible (McConnel, 1957, p. 54). Beforehand, they themselves had foraged and hunted for food, as they traveled, the woman digging for roots and the man spearing fish. According to the story, Hard Yam Woman carefully prepared the roots by cooking them with pieces of heated ant-bed (termite mound) and repeatedly wash-

ing and rinsing them. She carried a dillybag and bark container and Arrowroot Man had a spear-thrower and a tomahawk as well as spears.

Characters in Aboriginal myths do not often instruct human beings about food and water, nor do they usually transform themselves into food; they are more commonly seen using the resources that are already available. Usually no explanation of how the resources got there is given; it is enough, in these myths, that they *are* there and can be utilized by the characters whose story it is in the course of their adventures and encounters. That applies to the making or use of tools and other nonedible resources.

In a song series closely related to the Wawalag myth, the boomerang-legged honey spirit man Wudal, or Woial, carries bees in tightly plaited baskets hung from his shoulders; he chops out a honeycomb from a tree with his stone ax and gashes a paper-bark tree with his boomerang to obtain fresh water. (His boomerang legs are a type of bone deformity, said to be a result of early malnutrition.) The Wawalag themselves have baskets and digging sticks; they build a fire and try to cook their food on it and gather paper bark for sleeping mats and stringybark for a hut. The stone spear blades they carry are referred to in one of the Wudal songs: Ridarngu-speaking men who have dug out and shaped the stone sit around in a circle, wrapping the blades carefully in paper bark, then packing them into baskets. [See Wawalag.]

Metamorphosed stone objects at various sites are the grinding stones, food containers, domestic tools, and fish traps of mythic characters. Other myths throughout the continent tell of the making of spears and shields. In some cases, they say who was responsible; in others, mythic characters simply use the implements. For example, the Djanggawul came on the path of the rising sun in their bark canoe (or raft), but we are not told who made it. Boomerangs were not used or even traded in all regions. Where they were, they were not all the same: not all were returning; not all were used as weapons or clapping sticks for singing or as ritual defloration tools, or in women's secret rites. Similarly, the *didjeridu* (drone pipe) does not appear in inland or Western Desert myths. On the north coast of western Arnhem Land, however, it is mostly an ordinary item of a mythic songman's equipment. According to one *didjeridu* origin myth, after a troublesome mythic character had been killed and buried, people heard a strange new sound coming from underground. Far from being dead, the character had put the end of his abnormally long penis in his mouth and was blowing through it.

Some myths have characters using fire for cooking food and for warmth but make no reference to its ori-

gin. The Wawalag sisters, for instance, took it for granted. In other myths, there are characters who are credited with introducing it. Wuragag, in western Arnhem Land, brought it especially from his origin place, somewhere beyond Bathurst and Melville islands, so that people on the mainland would not need to eat their food raw. In other examples fire is a cause of quarrels, as in a simplified children's story from northeastern Arnhem Land in which Crocodile and Frilled (Blanket) Lizard, both men then, fight about fire. Crocodile threw a fire stick at Frilled Lizard, so that he grew small and reddish, taking on his lizard shape; Crocodile slid into the salt water and stayed there.

Theft of fire is a common theme and is often associated with birds. In an account from the Kurnai of Victoria, a "supernatural being called Bullum-baukan stole the fire of the early Kurnai. Narugul, the Crow, and Ngarang, the Swamp-hawk, having recovered it, Bullum-baukun ascended to the sky by climbing up a cord made of the sinews of the red wallaby." (Howitt, 1904, p. 486). In a Western Desert myth, Old Man Gandju's companions went hunting without him. He covered up their campfires and went away with his own fire stick. When they returned, they tried to make fire but could not. They died of cold and are visible today as a heap of granite stones at their old camping site. Gandju later had his fire stick stolen by two men, but he turned into a fire spirit and burned them to death. On the Daly River, in the Northern Territory, Dog tried to twirl a fire-drill stick to make fire to cook roots, but the stick always broke. He tried to steal a live fire stick from some women who were preparing an oven, but twice they drove him away. Big Hawk, his companion, was also unsuccessful, but Little Chicken Hawk was able to swoop down on a piece of glowing wood and fly off with it. In their camp, Dog had impatiently eaten all his yams raw. That is why dogs eat their food raw today and why they do not talk. (See Berndt and Berndt, 1982, pp. 396–397. Some fire myths in various parts of Australia are discussed by Maddock, 1970).

At one level, the myths of different regions provide two kinds of information. First, they contain details about terrain, vegetable and animal foods, and fresh and salt water, noting how these resources are utilized by mythic characters. Secondly, the artifacts that are mentioned can be located on maps, as in the case of boomerangs and *didjeridu*, indicating where and how they appear in myths—including ceremonial gift exchanges where mythic characters meet, engage in trade, or carry items from one area to another. Subthemes of both kinds, with varying content, are a rich source of data for comparison with the actualities of traditional Aboriginal life—corresponding, in a different dimen-

sion, to details of mythic origins and to the manufacture and use of sacred and secret-sacred materials. (Howitt, 1904, contains a wealth of detail on all of these points for southeastern Australia.)

A third kind of information is inseparable from the other two, as far as myths in this and in the secret-sacred dimensions are concerned. In the charter and guide that are set out explicitly or implicitly in the myths, the "what" of natural resources and artifacts does not stand on its own; the issue of "who" is crucial. For example, in the division of labor in everyday hunting and foraging, men use spears, women use digging sticks, and these tools symbolize their roles. Some food containers are specific to women (e.g., wooden carrying dishes throughout the Western Desert and elsewhere), whereas baskets or dillybags are used by women slung from their foreheads, by men slung from their shoulders, occasionally in everyday circumstances but often (as in northern Arnhem Land), when feathered and decorated, as sacred baskets holding sacred objects. This division of labor was ordained in myth, or myths served as a model justifying it for human beings. Other such themes in myth specify or imply who is permitted to eat or to prepare or to handle which foods, in what circumstances, and in what company: the range of food taboos that were a feature of all Aboriginal societies, varying in accordance with age, sex, ritual status, and region. The penalties for breaking such taboos might be imposed either by human agents on the basis of mythic injunctions or directly by supernatural figures who are believed to be able to cause illness or death. The same sorts of rules apply in the case of material objects; but in both cases, the sanctions and the penalties in regard to religious ritual matters are more conspicuous.

Mythic characters also stipulate—through actual statements or through their own example—how people should behave toward one another. They specify the rules for betrothal, marriage, and kinship, as well as the obligations and rights that should apply between particular persons and groups and in relationships involving varying degrees of constraints or taboos. These "social relations" themes, in some instances subthemes, are among the most recurrent in Aboriginal myths.

Regional Patterns. Apart from similarities in general themes, modified by regional distinctiveness in cultural details, there are examples where almost the same myth, or closely related myths, can be found over very great distances. The Kunapipi and Munga-munga, not necessarily under those names, are known in linguistically different populations over wide expanses of country. [See Gadjeri.] The rites that go with these mythic complexes have helped keep them largely intact while adapting to various local conditions. That is true also

for the Two Men myth and the myth of Malu, the Red Kangaroo Man, in their respective versions throughout the Western Desert and adjacent regions, as well as for the Dingari myth ritual complex.

In some cases myths seem to have spread slowly, through interactions between participants in large religious rituals, whether or not such myths are linked with those particular rituals. A few mythic themes have been reported from almost every part of the continent, with no accompanying references to any traveling rituals or cults—unlike, for instance, the Molonga song series of Queensland or the several Kurangara series of songs and myths ranging from the Kimberley to the north of the Western Desert. The most notable in this respect is the Rainbow Snake theme. [*See* Rainbow Snake.]

Australia's terrain and vegetation vary a great deal—from arid scrub, sand hills, and rocky hills to rain forests, fresh and tidal rivers, salt lakes, coastal beaches, and mangrove swamps. The populations of birds, mammals, reptiles, fishes, and insects vary accordingly. All of these factors find a place in myth. Even in adjoining regions, however, accounts of the origins of natural phenomena can diverge widely, as do the myths and stories about the sun, moon, and stars in southeast Australia (Howitt, 1904, pp. 427–434). There are also transcontinental differences in mythic statements about stars. Most regions have a number of such statements, at least to the extent of naming a few stars, and in some cases a wide range of individual stars and constellations. These are not conceptualized as material entities in their own right; virtually everywhere, with a few exceptions, the stars and constellations were originally in human or some other terrestrial form, and in their stories they are involved in human situations and show human emotions.

There are some widespread similarities. A falling star, or meteorite, usually presages or indicates a death. Just as common is the theme of a group of young women, often called in English the Seven Sisters, pursued by a man whose advances they reject. They escape into the sky, where they are now visible as the Pleiades; their pursuer, in some versions, is now a star in the constellation Orion. Among the Wotjobaluk of northwestern Victoria (Howitt, 1904, pp. 429–430), Native Cat Man was always chasing the women who are now the Pleiades. "Now he is up in the sky, still chasing them, and still behind." Howitt also (p. 787n.) refers to an Arabana story in which a number of girls become stars in the Pleiades and in the belt of Orion, while the man who tries to follow them is now "the principal star in Scorpio." In a New South Wales example (Parker, 1974, pp. 105–109, 125–127), their pursuer captured two of

them before they escaped into the sky; a group of boys who had wanted to marry them, and who died of despair when they could not, are now Orion's Sword and Belt. In various parts of the Great Victoria Desert and in the Western Desert generally, similar myths are known to women as well as to men (White, 1975, pp. 128–130; also, for one part of the story, Berndt and Berndt, 1982, p. 250). In the eastern Kimberley, the Pleiades women were chased by Eaglehawk, now the Southern Cross constellation (Kaberry, 1939, p. 12). But in the north of the Western Desert, by the 1980s Nyirana-Yulana and the women he pursued are regarded by women as "something for men to talk about, not for us."

Although the theme of a sky world, other than stars and clouds, appears in myths throughout the continent, it is more common in the south and southeast (bearing in mind that myth material from the southwest, like information on ritual and religious matters generally, is scarce because so little was recorded before the region's traditional cultures and people succumbed to outside pressures). There are more references to the inhabitants of the sky world and to ropes, vines, and other bridges between the sky and earth. Also, the land of the dead is more often located in the sky. For instance, after his physical death, the great Ngurunderi of the lower Murray River cleansed himself in the sea before going to the sky world to continue his nonearthly life. His canoe had earlier been metamorphosed into the Milky Way.

Another common theme deals with the questions of why and when certain creatures—venomous snakes, sharks, and the like—are dangerous. In a related group of myths, characters appear in the shape of snakes or other such creatures and are respected or feared because of their destructive or punitive powers. They may swallow their victims before regurgitating them (more or less intact in form) or vomiting them (not intact) as parts of the landscape or as sacred relics.

Although regional diffusion of mythic themes, with or without ritual expressions, is significant, the intraregional patterning of myths and related features is perhaps even more important. Traditionally, no myth or ritual or song sequence existed in isolation. Every such item was associated with particular social groups and people, so that there was a mosaic of proprietary rights, responsibilities, tasks, and rewards: a division of verbal and dramatic and song materials, and a division of labor in regard to holding and safeguarding and transmitting them to, and through, appropriate persons. Distinctions along lines of sex and age had a bearing on such transmission, and on rights to know and rights to participate and to transmit. Thus what might seem to

be the same myth could actually exist in a number of versions, with levels of complexity in form, content, and interpretation.

Contrasts have been drawn by, for example, Strehlow (1971) between wholly sung and wholly narrative versions of myth, especially in relation to esoteric as against public interpretations. He sets out and contrasts (pp. 147–165) the Northern Aranda Emianga myth in its narrative and song versions, combining "the myth and song of Ljaua women with those of the serpent ancestor (Ljaltakalbala)." (*Ljaua* is a small plant with edible seeds; the deep pool at Emianga was the women's origin site.)

The beginning of the narrative Emianga myth details the women's collection of seeds in wooden dishes and the processes of winnowing and grinding them, shaping them into "meal cakes," cooking, dividing, and eating them. A Willy Wagtail Woman who had come from the same pool later took seeds to her nephew, the huge serpent who had also emerged from the pool; she ground them, gave him an uncooked meal cake, and invited him to return with her for some cooked ones. The rest of the long story tells of his adventures: he swallowed all the people, and their belongings, at a camp of Echidna Men who, secretly goaded by his aunt, had been planning to kill him. He split himself open, let out their bones and their belongings, and sang his own wounds to heal. The same thing happened at a camp of Yam Men. Eventually he swallowed all the Ljaua women and vomited them out as *tjurunga* in the sacred cave at Emianga. Only the Willy Wagtail escaped into a narrow cave. He himself now remains forever inside the deep pool.

Briefly, Strehlow sees Aranda prose myths as giving "a coherent story of the history of a legendary totemic ancestor (or group of ancestors)," complete with place names, mythic tracks, and the rituals instituted by such characters. He distinguishes these from ordinary stories in the Aranda cultural area on the grounds that stories are not tied specifically to sites, ritual expressions, or group ownership and are therefore, he implies, more mobile as well as less sacred.

In any one regional pattern of myth, story, song, and ritual material, every item needs to be considered in relation to the others and to the total context within the social frame. Children who grew up learning their own language, culture, and social relationships without very much intrusion by alien influences were introduced to this pattern of myths through relatively simple examples and were taught to see those examples in connection with others, as part of a pattern. The context of myths and stories was as significant in the learning process as were other contextual features. Relatively simplified (but not contextualized) children's versions of myth are regarded by many traditionally oriented Aborigines as the only suitable versions for most outsiders. The more detailed and elaborate versions they themselves have learned would, they say, not be appreciated or understood.

Traditional stories for children purport to answer some, not all, of the same questions that adult myths raise. Who are we? Where did we come from? Where did it all begin? Why do people die? Where do people go when they die?

In parts of the Western Desert, children's stories may be accompanied by fast-moving scenes drawn in the sand, with sticks or leaves to represent the main characters. They are sometimes dismissed by adults as insignificant because they lack portentous meanings or ritual connections. They are just-so stories about how various creatures assumed their shapes, why they behave as they do, and so on. For example, Marsupial Mole Man, in the north of the Western Desert, changed into a mole after a quarrel with his two wives, who attacked him because he had deceived them and failed to provide them with meat. This story, then, presents children with several obvious themes, including the message of a husband's duty as a hunter, and the incidents are clearly located at specific sites. It is one of several such stories which become more complex as children are judged more competent to deal with them.

In western Arnhem Land, a children's story about the Long-necked Tortoise Woman, Ngalmangii, tells how she and Echidna Woman had quarreled after she had eaten Echidna Woman's baby, left in her care when they were camping together. Her excuse was "I was hungry!" Echidna flung at Tortoise the flat stone she always carried, and Tortoise threw the small bamboo spears she always had with her at Echidna. That is how they took their present shapes. In northeastern Arnhem Land, children are (or were) introduced to the great Djanggawul epic with a shorter account of the travels of the Sun Woman and her small daughter, a story that includes such items as the colorful feathered string symbolizing the rays of the sun.

In these examples there is a transition from simple to less simple versions within a similar range of topics or themes. Another, more significant point is the interconnection between adult myths within the same region. There have been suggestions that "a myth is best interpreted through another myth."

Fate and destiny. Mythic characters proceeding on their journeys are likely to encounter others whose stories lead them in divergent directions. Such meetings

may involve conversations and perhaps camping to-
gether for a short time and then separating, never to see
one another again.

An example of a very brief, single encounter comes in
a western Arnhem Land Rainbow Snake myth told to
me in 1950 by Gunwinggu-speaking women at Oenpelli.
The Snake "arose far away, coming from the north,
from the middle [of the] sea. She saw land, and came
up out of the sea. No water there! Dry land! She went
underneath again, travelling underground, and came up
here at Oenpelli, at this water where we drink. Then
she went on to the waterfall, where those two Birds
spoke to her." Following the stream, she eventually dug
out a deep billabong, set rocks in place to form a cave,
and gave birth to an egg, which she put in the sun to
harden. The two Birds, whose spirits remain forever at
the waterfall, are the only other Dreaming characters
noted in her story until an old Dangbun-speaking man,
Manyurulbu, "came to that tabu water because he was
thirsty. He saw the egg, broke it, cooked it and ate it.
Inside the cave she moved in her sleep, feeling some-
thing was wrong; she came out, and smelt him. She was
weeping, looking for her egg. She took him under the
water, then brought him up to the surface and vomited
his bones." He "went hard," like rock. He became taboo
and was transformed into an eternal spirit presence,
djang, at that site. The Rainbow Snake, in the cave
above the billabong, watches over the other two eggs
that she made and allowed to become hard. (One was
stolen during the late 1940s but was returned after a
local outcry: people were afraid the Snake might punish
them for failing to prevent the theft.) No one is allowed
to go to where the Snake is lying.

This is an almost typical Rainbow Snake story. [*See*
Rainbow Snake.] The Snake's meeting with the two
Birds has numerous parallels in western Arnhem Land
myths in general. The conversation between them is not
reported, but it is unlikely, given the Rainbow Snake's
reputation, that the Birds told her to move to another
site. Usually the Rainbow Snake does not meet animals
or human characters as equals: the encounter with the
old Dangbun man is more characteristic. Although in
the final outcome he also becomes taboo and immortal-
ized at that place, he is less taboo, and less dangerous,
than the Snake.

Among the rocks and caves of the western Arnhem
Land escarpment, every large hill and even small topo-
graphical features are locally compartmentalized,
shared among a number of *djang.* One of the exceptions
is Wuragag, Tor Rock, who rises as a landmark above
the coastal plains. Wuragag "made himself hard" with-
out the intervention of the Rainbow Snake, partly be-
cause "he was afraid. He thought some men [other

mythic characters] were coming to kill him." He had
been the husband of Waramurungundji, the anthropo-
morphic creative mother of this region, but she left him
after he slapped her cheek for referring openly to coitus.
After that, she tried unsuccessfully to introduce the rite
of circumcision for boys.

A similar venture in the south of the region also
failed. An old man, known as Stone Knife Carrier, or
Penis Djang, came traveling from beyond Dangbun ter-
ritory, circumcising boys along his route. However, the
first Gunwinggu boy he tried to circumcise died in-
stantly. Men who had gathered for the ritual turned on
him angrily, declaring that the practice was "not for us,
we who speak Gunwinggu and Gunbalang" (a language
spoken farther north, toward the coast). Traditionally,
circumcision was not practiced in western Arnhem
Land. The two myths provide a reason, and the Stone
Knife Carrier episode ends with a statement about lin-
guistic and cultural boundaries. Waramurungundji was
more successful with girls' puberty rites. By teaching
her young daughter at puberty, through actions and
verbal advice, she showed what should be done at first
and subsequent menstrual periods, including the rou-
tine behavior of squatting over a heap of hot coals and
ashes, frequently changed, avoiding water courses
(fresh or salt), and observing social and food taboos.

In western Arnhem Land alone, more than in a num-
ber of other regions, the theme of travelers meeting is
built into the fabric of many myths, and knowing those
myths also involves knowing at least something about
all of the characters whose paths cross at or near partic-
ular sites. Some travel alone, in pairs, or in small fam-
ily groups and join others in casual or long-term sweet-
heart or marital unions—or in hostilities—but in a
large proportion of these myths the Rainbow Snake
provides a common thread.

Another Rainbow Snake story from the same region
leads us to several further points. The venomous snake
Bek was once a man. In his travels he came to a mor-
tuary platform, looked at the soles of the corpse's feet
to see who it was, and identified it as his uncle. He was
upset and angry: "They [someone] killed my uncle!" He
went as a death messenger, taking the news. The people
(unspecified, but relatives are implied) wept and gashed
themselves in grief. He "stood as *gungulor* for them";
the bearer of a death message takes the risk of being
attacked by the mourners. He decided to take revenge
on them. "I'll damage a Dreaming *djang,* and then that
Mai [an oblique reference to the Snake] will come and
eat us all!" He used the term *man-djang;* the *man-* prefix
usually classifies vegetable foods and plants, but when
attached to other substantive forms it indicates an es-
pecially sacred or ritually important quality. He found

a taboo palm tree and chopped it to pieces. A great rain came and drowned all of those people at that place. But he went into a rotten tree, buried himself inside it, and spat at them all: "You turn into rocks—but as for me, I become a creature!" The narrator added, "Ngalyod bit their heads, ate their noses. Their bones lie about like rocks, but Bek put himself as *djang;* and his spirit remains there, at Maganbang, in Magani."

Bek's vengeful action is one of several such cases in western Arnhem Land myths, but it is only in the realm of myth that there are any reported instances of suicide in traditional Aboriginal Australia. Revenge usually takes the form of direct violence or indirect sorcery, and both of these are found often in myth. Also, like Wuragag, Bek made his own decision about his *djang* transformation; unlike Wuragag, he survives in the form of a living, mobile natural species, still antagonistic to human beings, as well as in a site-linked spirit manifestation. The Rainbow Snake was not directly an agent in his transmutation. The myth includes no reference to any attempt on Bek's part to evade being swallowed by the Rainbow Snake or to plead not to be swallowed, as some mythic characters do; nor is there any mention of the Snake trying to engulf him or being thwarted or defeated, as in cases from coastal areas where a Snake manifestation is killed and cut open to release the victims. However, while in one sense they are victims, in another sense they are not.

Western Arnhem Land is unusual in the high proportion of statements about transformation and intent made by its mythic characters. Many mythic accounts, especially of potential *djang,* open with such statements; others come at the conclusion. The pervasive tone of the *djang* myths is one of destiny and of its inevitability, and the Rainbow Snake is, for most such characters, the main force through which destiny is achieved. A few characters manage to delay the inevitable end, but only temporarily: they might weep or try to escape, but they "couldn't do anything." If, in rare instances, they were helped by a "clever man," an Aboriginal doctor, they eventually "became hard," and their *djang* sites are identified as such.

Without spelling it out, the myths make contradiction here plain. On the one hand, there is the inescapable aspect of fate: the aim of a *djang* character's journey and the choice of the "right place" are predetermined, although the determining agent is not mentioned. On the other hand, the actions that cause the final disaster, as it is often described, are mostly set in a more negative frame even when the Rainbow Snake is not involved. Mythic characters "go wrong" or "do wrong"; they take a wrong turning spatially or in terms of behavior, or someone else "makes them go wrong." Al-

though not defined as such, this contradiction is almost like a contrast between preordained destiny and individual will. It has a parallel in local views on sorcery, which combine the acknowledgment that physical death is the fate of all human beings with the belief that it can be brought about prematurely through human action.

A large range of myths deal with issues of human choice in regard to good and bad behavior in social relationships. They appear in the content of *djang* myths but only as secondary themes. Except in such examples as the Bek myth, they are not shown as causal or precipitating factors in attracting the Rainbow Snake. The Snake is drawn more or less automatically to the following kinds of scenes: when, for example, a goanna or an opossum sizzles and bursts while someone is trying to cook it in a low-lying sandy place during the wet season (or on a flat rock, which is likely to crack); when someone mistakenly kills a daughter or son of the Rainbow Snake; or when someone makes loud noises, allows children to cry, or breaks food or ritual taboos. In the myths, all of these are presented as potentially, but not inevitably, dangerous circumstances: the characters concerned have a measure of choice. Some of them, in their final moments, say, "We went wrong, we shouldn't have done that!"—whereas others, such as Bek, know exactly what they are doing and make a deliberate choice to draw upon a supernatural force to achieve a personal objective. One sociocultural theme implied in the Bek story is, "If someone has an unsatisfied grievance, watch him carefully because he may take a secret revenge." That theme emerges more conspicuously in sorcery accounts, in myth and in everyday life, especially in regard to neglected obligations or a girl's rejection of her betrothed or her husband. Resolution of such conflicts is seen as a human responsibility. As a rule it is only the physical consequences of human action that bring the Rainbow Snake to deal with ordinary people—noise, ground movements, breaches of taboo, damage to taboo sites, and the like.

Myth patterns in local perspective. People throughout western Arnhem Land were traditionally acquainted, at least in outline, with most of the *djang* myth themes and could identify *djang* sites. More significantly, they were aware that the country around them was spiritually alive with thousands of major and minor presences, and they knew that every *djang* site had its story and its specific character(s) and that all of this was documented in myth, supplemented by illustrations in rock art and in bark paintings. Adding to the "living" quality of the whole region were, and are, numerous spirit characters such as the Mimi, whose ancient, stick-thin likenesses, drawn in blood, appear in paintings in the rocky

hills and escarpment country. Other spirit beings who can be either friendly or malevolent include the ghost aspects of dead human beings, whose souls have gone to the land of the dead, leaving a third aspect to return to child spirit centers to await reincarnation.

The Rainbow Snake, in swallowing and (among more inland groups) vomiting manifestations, is an important linking theme in regard to the shape of the landscape and, to some extent, of the seascape. The Snake connects land and people and the invisible, supernatural dimension in another way, in the sphere of religious ritual—in the Ubar, for instance, and in the Kunapipi, with their bearing on fertility and on initiation rites and their core of secret-sacred mystique. Other important characters are widely known in western Arnhem Land, not only through their cross-country traveling but also through their position in the same kind of ritual context. Among them are the Nagugur, associated with the Kunapipi rites. In some versions of their myth, they are a father-son pair traveling with their wives; in others, a group of that name, sometimes said to be self-renewing or self-perpetuating. Associated with the Ubar rites is Yirawadbad, a venomous snake-man (in one ritual manifestation, a Rainbow Snake); Nadulmi or Narol'mi, a kangaroo-man; and Ngaldjorlbu, the Ubar woman. Associated with the Maraiin rites are Lumaluma, the whale-man, a good and bad character, and, among others, Laradjeidja of the Yiridja moiety and Gundamara of the Dua moiety. (Dua and Yiridja are patrilineal-classifying terms that have been spreading from northeastern Arnhem Land.)

The paths, or tracks, of these and other characters are usually implicit in their myths, but it is the sites that receive most attention. That is the general rule throughout the continent too, but within a certain territorial range people also know and identify the tracks without hesitation, partly because these are paths they themselves are, or were traditionally, likely to use in their own journeys. In the Western Desert, mythic tracks are especially important in respect to what used to be called "conception totemism." The place at which a woman first reported awareness of pregnancy need not be a named site. The crucial question is, On or near what track—whose track—did this happen? For instance, was it on or near a Dingari route, a Malu (Red Kangaroo) route, or a Wadi Gudjara (Two Men) route? The answer has implications for the child's religious ritual rights and participation in later life.

Traditionally, the myths of a region—and the sites, paths, and activities they enshrined—made up a living context map, pervaded and highlighted by religious rituals and full of practical information about natural, human, and supernatural resources. The verbal surface of the myths and songs, the visible and audible surface of the rituals, and the material representations that went with both of these never contained all the information available for understanding, interpreting, and acting in relation to them. Even knowing them all *in toto* would not be enough. In an ongoing situation, the social context of discussion—the "running commentary," as Malinowski called it—is an indispensable part of any myth or ritual constellation. Furthermore, to take a single myth or a single ritual sequence out of its larger context of myths or of rites is to ignore what can be vital clues to its meaning. This is not to say that one must have, or must include in one's scrutiny, details of every account in any given region. No Aboriginal person in a traditionally oriented society could do that. But adults in such a society would be aware of the extent and nature of the information and of its relevance, even though some would be more knowledgeable by virtue of age, ritual status, interest, and competence. That kind of awareness is a minimal requirement for students of myth.

Interconnecting themes. An inside perspective on myth should coincide, up to a point, with an outside perspective—recognizing that in neither case can there be a single perspective. Over and above that, however, an outside approach should take into account a wider span of similarities and differences in a larger comparative frame. Such comparisons should begin on a small, regional scale. This frame should go beyond what people take as their own immediate mythic and ritual and social context and include material that they may know or have heard a little about but do not explicitly or consistently bring together.

A useful example in this respect is northeastern Arnhem Land, a fairly compact region for which a great deal of information on myth and ritual has been available since the 1920s. The two most important mythic and ritual sequences there are the Djanggawul and the Wawalag. [*See* Djanggawul; Wawalag; *and* Yulunggul.] William Lloyd Warner, from the vantage point of his fieldwork at Milingimbi in the 1920s, attempted a brief comparison of these two great sequences. The significant point is that he made the attempt, even though it reflects some of the difficulties inherent in the exercise. As he noted, the Djanggawul constellation was better known in northeastern Arnhem Land, the Wawalag in the north-central area. That position continues to apply, up to the mid-1980s, with one exception which must have been relevant even in Warner's day. The Djanggawul, traveling from east to west, roughly parallel to the course of their mother, the Sun, did not move very far from the coast. Milingimbi, in the Crocodile Islands, was virtually their last port of call in eastern Arnhem

Land. Extensive versions of their myth were still well known there, to both men and women, up to the 1950s, although they have been somewhat attenuated in more recent years. Even in the early 1960s, rumors were circulating on the eastern side that an incarnation of one of the Djanggawul sisters had been seen at Milingimbi—not the routine type of incarnation of child spirits, nor the routine use of personal names drawn from myth, songs, and place names, but a unique superhuman incarnation. The rumors were short-lived. However, the north-central recognition of the Djanggawul's importance is much less marked farther south, where emphasis is on the Wawalag constellation, with its inland overtones, and on the longer-standing inland association with Kunapipi ritual.

Both constellations, Djanggawul and Wawalag, share a common, pervasive theme of fertility of the land and of all its living inhabitants. Within the overall theme, the Djanggawul stress the human component. The two sisters, and on the eastern side they and their brother, produced the first human populations in the region, locating them at specific named sites and telling them what languages (dialects) they should speak, along with other customary rules these new people were to follow. They provided supplies for fresh water and indirectly indicated what foods they were to eat or abstain from. The Wawalag sisters are often referred to in connection with fertility, but this rests mainly on their connection with the Great Python, who swallowed them. They were not traditionally regarded in northeastern Arnhem Land as the very first people or as creators on a large scale, as were the Djanggawul. (Some bark paintings on this theme in the Djanggawul myth show multiple birth scenes on a superhuman numerical scale.) The Djanggawul story includes some "human" touches, such as putting newly born girls onto soft grass and boys onto rougher ground. But the sisters are almost impersonal as contrasted with the Wawalag; although they are not forcibly separated from the children by the Snake, as in the Wawalag case, they continue on their journey toward the setting sun, voluntarily leaving the children behind to fend for themselves.

The Wawalag sisters are sometimes referred to as "the first mothers," but no time sequence is suggested to distinguish them from the Djanggawul in this respect. Certainly in the Wawalag myth the sisters have a more obvious mothering relationship with their child(ren). (In Aboriginal Australia a mother's sister would also be called "mother.") Between them the Wawalag sisters have only two children, three at the most. They care for the children as individuals and try to protect them from the Snake; detailed versions include conversations about looking after the children, and a

breast-feeding fireside scene for the new mother. The mother-child relationship is a focal theme in this part of the myth. Also, the Wawalag sisters perform almost no miraculous feats, even though they are bringing with them powerful songs and dances from their inland place of origin. They are more vulnerable than the Djanggawul and have to join with the Great Python before their ritual linkages and also the monsoon rains can be activated. Although there are some obvious similarities as well as contrasts between the two myths, a more detailed inquiry would reveal that they are even more obviously complementary.

Another important constellation in the same region, already noted, is also complementary to the Wawalag myth but less clearly so to the Djanggawul. Like them, it belongs to Dua moiety clans. The central character, himself Dua, is the boomerang-legged honey-spirit man, Wudal. His journey from the distant inland toward the Roper River is told in song, not in story-type narrative. It is a riteless myth, made up of images, place names, and short action sequences. Wudal is often described as a single male person. His body is covered with white feathered string, and he wears a headband of kangaroo claws; long baskets full of bees and honey are slung from both shoulders. He moves with a kind of skipping step, partly because the sunbaked rocks are hot under his feet; he pauses at intervals to dance and to tap the sides of his baskets. However, the traveler can be female (*Laglag* is one of the names more often used in that case) or, as in other single or multiple myth examples from other regions, a group of Dreaming men and women. The song sequence details his journey, the creatures encountered on the way, and his own actions. The sequence of some of the songs can vary according to different versions, but it should always end with a song accounting for the redness of the sunset sky. Other explanations for the redness are offered in several song and myth series from both moieties; in one, for instance, the color symbolizes the blood of the Wawalag sisters.

In one song (noted earlier), Yiridja men are making stone spear blades, which are of the Dua moiety; the flakes they chip off in the process are Yiridja, and in kin relationship the blades are like mothers to them. Wudal men are there too. Tired of sitting down, the men stand up and practice throwing their spears and posture with them as if dancing. Later, Dua Wudal men of various subsections (an eightfold division into social categories, widespread through much of Aboriginal Australia) have been hunting and killing Yiridja-moiety kangaroos: the song notes their subsection affiliations, one by one. They return to their home base, a large, freshwater billabong. Leaning their spears against the stringybark

trees there, they lean forward to look at their reflections in the water, then stoop down to drink, making lapping noises and spitting out some of the water. In the late afternoon they settle down to eat their kangaroo meat, which they like raw, with blood running. They spit as they eat, reddening the sky, causing the red cloud, or sunset.

Other songs have noted the creatures Wudal sees on his travels and at the sacred billabong: colored caterpillars, frilled (blanket) lizards, several kinds of birds, and his own bees. Several songs describe a sacred mound of earth that men have prepared near the billabong. Wudal people, gathered for dancing, speak the untranslatable ritual language, Gin-nga, or Gidjin, associated with this. On the mound they have erected two painted *djuwei* posts with bark hair, representing two adolescent girls. In the "honey wind" part of the series, Wudal is thirsty and eats honey from his baskets and from the sacred trees at the billabong and kangaroo meat from a separate basket. As he eats, he spits. The spray of saliva rises up, mixing with the spray from the Wudal men and with the crows and the bees. It joins the clouds rising from the smoke of fires sparked by the flaking of the stone spear blades and from fires lit by Wudal with the bark fire stick he always carries. It is "burning-grass time." The clouds are dark with rain—Dua rain and wind, the "wind of the honey and the bees," blowing from the sacred billabong.

The songs, each seemingly inconsequential in itself, build up into a coherent pattern with a number of pertinent themes. One is the Wawalag connection. Some of the place names noted in the songs also appear in the Wawalag myth. One, Muruwul, was said to be the "billabong of Wudal, Crow, and the Wawalag." The two *djuwei* posts resemble stylized Wawalag figures and have the same shredded-bark hair. In the Rainbow Snake's song in the Wawalag myth, the sacred mound is equated with the Wawalag sisters' hut that the Snake is preparing to coil around before swallowing them. He also sang the names of places from which the honey wind comes, bringing its Dua-moiety rain. There are other meeting points between the two myths, some explicit, others more oblique. As myths, the two are generally asserted to be separate; and the ritual associations of the Wawalag, as well as the central role of the snake (who has no parallel in the Wudal sequence), help to keep them distinct.

Whatever the details of similarity and difference between them, however, their most salient feature is their complementary involvement in the seasonal cycle. The year is divided into a succession of named seasons, each with its characteristic combination of rainfall, temper-

ature, vegetation growth or decay, availability of various foods, and the behavior of various land and sea creatures. It is not a simple division between wet and dry seasons. The Wawalag-Yulunggul contribution is responsible for the Dua-moiety monsoon from the west and northwest, the principal source of fertilizing rains. The major contribution of the Wudal song sequence *in toto* is the gentler, less ferocious but moderately strong wind and rains, also Dua, that bring relief from the heat at a time when the grasses and foliage of the inland are dry and inflammable. Lightning strikes, as well as deliberate burning-off for hunting and regeneration in selected areas, cause large, billowing smoke clouds. Perhaps just as significant in this seasonal context is the theme of bees and honey. The songs that focus on the bees bring in several singing names of the stringybark: it is *gongmiri* (it has "hands"); it is *mareiin* ("sacred"). Wild honey is a highly desirable food, and the flowering of the eucalypts signals the development of other foods.

Even though no formally organized rites are attached to this song series, the actual singing and accompanying dancing, though performed in a less emotionally charged atmosphere, are equivalent to such rites. The series is in the category of so-called clan songs, in this case belonging to Dua moiety dialect units such as Djambarbingu and Riraidjingu. The singing in itself affirms and anticipates the coming of the required state of affairs in an almost timeless sequence. The honey wind, then, comes between the west monsoon and the southeast trade winds that bring light rain at the end of the cold weather.

Wudal himself is credited with bringing the subsection system to northeastern Arnhem Land. Of inland origin, the subsection system is now an integral feature of social organization all along the north coast. Boomerangs, however, are not, except in ritual settings such as the Kunapipi, they are still associated with "other" Aboriginal groups. The songs reveal Wudal as a stranger, coming north toward the coast for the first time; the coming of travelers from one area to another is one of the commonest themes in all Australian Aboriginal myths. And he is a benefactor, bringing bees and honey, taking part in preparation and distribution of stone spearheads, and strategically sending rain between the deluge of the monsoon and the lighter falls from the southeast.

The complementary relationship between the two patrilineal moieties, Dua and Yiridja, is a subtheme in many myths and song series. They are portrayed as different but interdependent. Everything and everyone of significance is classified in those terms. Even the major mythic figures, the deities, do not stand outside the sys-

tem: they are either Dua or Yiridja. However, while men's offspring are in the same patrilineal moiety as themselves, women's are not: Yiridja women have Dua offspring, and vice versa. Except for the great Djanggawul, themselves Dua, who made children of both moieties—in a situation where they were formulating, not necessarily conforming with, the rules—myths and songs note this almost zig-zag descent line linking mothers and their offspring. The two moieties are not identified by a single pair of symbols, as are the famous Eaglehawk and Crow of southeastern Australia. They have multiple associations, spread across the whole field of possibilities. Thus, there is a Yiridja shark species, but the large, aggressive Dua shark is more prominent in song and in clan-linked symbolism and oratory. In shark songs, a female Dua shark must have Yiridja offspring: in procreation, "Yiridja comes out of Dua," "Dua comes out of Yiridja." The song and myth references are a reminder that neither moiety can do without the other and that patrilineal rights and obligations are not the only consideration: a person has certain rights also in the myths, songs, and ritual affairs of his or her mother and mother's brothers, including rights to tell and to sing and participate.

The Wudal myth resembles the clan song style of presentation in being sung rather than told, in whole or in parts, as a narrative. The clan songs deal predominantly in imagery and in song words specifying attributes and activities of various creatures and other natural phenomena. Yiridja rain and wind from the southeast are treated in this way in one song sequence, where mythic characters as such play only a minor part. Another popular subtheme in myths and songs purports to answer a twofold question: How do clouds come about, and what (or who) makes rain? Rainmaking rites are virtually lacking in northeastern Arnhem Land, except for the larger seasonal fertility affairs that link the Djanggawul and Wawalag and other myth and ritual complexes. Aside from outstanding figures such as the Lightning Snake, and Larrpan the Cyclone Man (whose long penis is associated with rain and thunder), the image of spitting and spraying out moisture, as in the Wudal songs, recurs in a number of settings. In one song sequence, spray rising from whales in their rare appearances offshore automatically causes clouds, followed by rain. Lighting fires that send up columns of smoke, another Wudal activity, is another way of making clouds and rain, not necessarily in the same area as the fires. There are clan songs about Dua fire and others about Yiridja fire, just as there are distinct song series relating to clouds and rain. Clouds, in named varieties, are either Dua or Yiridja; they come from, pass over,

and go toward named places and populations. Clouds of both moieties may meet and pass each other, just as freshwater streams and tidal rivers may contain layers of water belonging to different moieties.

Such images are basic ingredients in the clan songs, whether or not they are explicitly associated with mythic characters. They permeate the myths of this region, with their often poetic language. In varying degrees they also enter into the so-called play stories, the *wogal dou*, that include stories designed mainly for children, such as a version of the Djanggawul myth. These range from the trivial to the portentous or tragic. *Wogal* means "play" but carries an underlying tone of seriousness or purpose; *dou* means "information."

Clouds are more prominent than stars in northeastern Arnhem Land myths and songs. One exception is the evening star, symbolically identified with the large water lily, the lotus, and also associated in song with the death and return to life of the moon. The morning star comes from Bralgu, the mythical island in the Gulf of Carpentaria from which the Djanggawul set out on their epic journey to the Australian mainland. It is also the home of souls of Dua-moiety dead. That theme connects it with the Djanggawul, although the song series that goes with mortuary rites for a dead Dua person is separate from the principal Djanggawul myth. So is the myth that describes what happens to the soul on its voyage to Bralgu and when it reaches there, and that also gives advice on what to expect from the spirit guardians there and how to behave toward them. That myth is supplemented by the account of a Dua-moiety man, Yawalngura, said to have gone to Bralgu by canoe while he was still living and to have returned for just long enough to report his experiences (Warner, 1937, pp. 524–528).

The song imagery begins with a corpse on its mortuary platform, then dwells, in turn, on the creatures that move to and fro between it and Bralgu. One section of the sequence focuses on the morning stars that Bralgu spirits send out to specifically named sites on the mainland and islands of northeastern Arnhem Land. This overall combination of the more conventionalized Djanggawul creation myth, the corroborative report of a living human being, and the song sequence on the topic of a Dua person's final transition to the island from which the Djanggawul embarked on their journey, dwells explicitly on the two dimensions of human life—the spiritual and the physical. The decay of the body is frankly stated, in some detail, but that process is demonstrated to be inseparable from the continuing life of the soul after the death of the body.

Two associated myth complexes make it clear that

not all of the soul goes on the voyage. One of these complexes, which is not set out in narrative form but usually as an adjunct to other accounts, emphasizes the theme of reincarnation or continuity. One part of the deceased person's spirit remains in its former country, to animate the fetus of a human being in the appropriate social categories, an event revealed in a dream to the prospective father or father's sister, or other eligible relatives. A third part, the trickster spirit, is the subject of many *wogal dou* and other stories, some of them highly dramatic. Together, the substance of all of these myths and songs makes up a detailed commentary on the transcendental issues of human life and death: how individual people came into being, something about their life on earth as human beings, and what they can expect to happen after that. They do not, however, take up the difficult question of relationships with close relatives and spouses of the opposite moiety. The question is traditionally left unanswered—or, rather, not asked. In the conventional view, people of the Yiridja moiety go to their own land of the dead, an island off the north coast. The Yiridja guardians of the dead also send items to living people on the mainland and offshore islands. The songs tell how these things come bobbing and dancing on the waves, borne by the north and northeast Yiridja winds.

A major theme in all the myths of northeastern Arnhem Land is the relationship between people and their land. When the mythic characters shaped the land, they shaped the sky, the clouds, and the seasons—the total environment that provided a background for themselves and for all the living beings there.

In the Wudal myth as in the Djanggawul and Wawalag, and in eastern Arnhem Land generally, the patterning of cross-references is much more noticeable than in many other parts of Aboriginal Australia. There is a concern with small details, which are not left suspended or clustered loosely but fit together in a variety of coherent shapes. The interlocking of items and themes has been tentatively described as representing a characteristic sociocultural style which finds expression in graphic art such as bark paintings and stylized body designs (C. H. Berndt, 1970, p. 1316). Strehlow notes the same point in stressing the need to examine material from all of the Aranda groups in studying myths in central Australia:

> When looking through a collection of myths that have been gathered in any one of these groups, one feels that one is being led into a wide-spread maze, into a vast labyrinth with countless corridors and passages and side-walks, all of which are connected with one another in ramifications that at times appear altogether baffling in their complexity and interdependence. (Strehlow, 1947, p. 45)

Precedents and Contrasts. The creative period of the Dreaming is traditionally regarded as the principal, indisputable source of rules and injunctions governing human behavior. This early period is portrayed in myth as an era of development and process: the sociocultural as well as the natural world was taking shape or, rather, being given shape not only by the major deities but also by the host of mythic characters who were, and continue to be, an integral part of the process.

When the lawmaking, lawgiving characters make pronouncements at the end of their earthly journey in the formative era, their myths have already recorded the events leading up to these; they do not merely note the pronouncements but tell how and why they came to be made. The mythic explanation, in many cases, describes the very behavior or situations the rules were supposed to guard against, prohibit, or at least discourage. Even when myths spell out the details of such behavior, they do not always add the warning that it is wrong. In the ongoing traditional Aboriginal scene, the messages believed to be contained in myth did not need to be stated explicitly on any one occasion of telling or singing or ritual enactment. There were other opportunities for that, formal or otherwise; and in any case, the levels of complexity in interpretation varied according to the social and ritual context. The dynamic, continuing aspect of myth has its counterpart in human life: the events set in train by the mythic beings are still in process. To keep things going in the appropriate way, this and that must be done, in religious ritual terms and in everyday social living. Myths were not designed as an intellectual exercise or for aesthetic pleasure or entertainment. They were for use—for information, explanation, and action. Narrative myths, outside the more formalized ritual context, were open to audience participation and questions and comment. Sometimes a narrator would amplify certain passages when he or she considered that some members of the audience needed further information on a topic.

In this living mythology, no myth is taken as a total package, the content of which is to be accepted or rejected *en bloc*. Even where claims are made to that effect, they are largely ideal statements or, rather, statements of principle that take for granted the matters of selection and interpretation that accompany even the most rigid attempts to maintain verbal (and ritual) adherence to an unchanging pattern.

Some precedents are fairly straightforward: in regard to food and material resources, for instance, that are fundamental in making a living. Another set of mythic themes that also seem to have been taken very much as a given recounts the shaping of human and other forms of life. In general, the potential for change was inherent

in all of the mythic characters. The shape in which they appeared at the beginning of their respective stories was not necessarily the same as that of their final appearance. More often than not, it was quite different, but the emphasis is on the word *appearance*. They had built into them the program or plan which emphasized the shared quality of all life but accorded them different roles and different shapes in the "web of life" that encompassed them all. However, as far as human shapes were concerned, myths put forward more or less common views as to what a human being should look like (as well as how he or she should behave).

Howitt (1904, pp. 475–476, 484ff.) provides some interesting examples of this. Bat was lonely, because "there was no difference between the sexes," so "he altered himself and one other, so that he was the man and the other was the woman"; he also made fire. In another version the great being Bunjil "made men of clay and imparted life to them," and his brother Bat "brought women up out of the water to be their wives." Among the Yuin, it was the Emu-Wren who shaped incomplete creatures into men and women. On Cape York Peninsula a White Sand Snake Man, wanting a wife, castrated and cut an opening in his younger brother to make him into a woman (McConnel, 1957, pp. 128–130); the same action is also attributed to Moon (p. 28). In the eastern Kimberley an old mythic woman "tried to subincise girls and 'make them into men.' But they developed into young women," and she admitted defeat (Kaberry, 1939, p. 201). The Djanggawul, in contrast, with their dominant position in the mythic scene in northeastern Arnhem Land, adjusted their own shapes to what they considered proper for human beings. All that was needed in their case was clitoris shortening for the sisters and penis shortening for the brother. This episode has an initiatory connotation, just as in the eastern Kimberley version of the subincision attempt. And in fact the bodily operations which are part of so many initiation rituals conform with the same body-shaping, body-marking principles that are implied, if not actually enunciated, in the more comprehensive initial efforts. So are the minor body-marking conventions of cicatrization, nasal septum piercing, and the like. All of these, like hairstyles, rest on mythic edicts or suggestions.

A theme that is more emotionally charged is how, and why, death is the lot of all human beings. In many myths, Moon is somehow connected with this. In one western Arnhem Land myth, simplified as a children's account (because children traditionally learned, quite young, the facts of bodily death), Moon Man and Djabo, Spotted Cat Man, traveling together, succumbed to a sickness that was spreading across the land. Moon was

a *margidjbu*, a healer or clever man. He recovered and wanted to revive Djabo, but Djabo didn't trust Moon, so he refused—and died. Because of that, all human beings must die, and their bodies cannot be renewed, but when Moon dies, he always comes back anew after three days. There are many variants on the same theme. This one carries an added message: if you are sick and a *margidjbu* offers to heal you, you must have faith in him and in his treatment to survive. In east Kimberley, Moon originated death and wrong marriage by trying to marry a woman he called mother-in-law. "She and the other women with her attacked him in fury and cut off his organs which changed to stone." Then he declared that after dying he would "come back in five days," but they would not come back (Kaberry, 1939, pp. 128, 199–200). Howitt (1904, pp. 428–429) reports the same kind of edict from southeastern Australia.

Strehlow (1947, pp. 44–45) outlines a different myth among the northern Aranda. Near Ilkakngara, Curlew People emerged from the hard rock: women first, one making an opening in the rock with her nose, then men. The first man lit a fire, but the others were angry and pointed a magic bone against him, so that he died. After he was buried, grieving women danced around his grave, and he began to work his way up through the ground, head first. He had almost freed his shoulders when Magpie, in a rage, thrust a heavy mulga spear into his neck and stamped him down hard into the ground, ordering him to remain there forever. If Magpie had not so forcibly intervened, everyone who died would have come to life again, emerging successfully from the ground. Strehlow notes that other "legends" express the same general idea.

Themes that are more open to debate or to questions of interpretation mostly hinge on matters of social relationships. One is about the nature of participation and control in religious affairs, especially ritual affairs, as between men and women. The key set of questions in mythic terms is "Who first found, owned, or controlled the most sacred religious materials? What happened? Did that situation change?" Outside the field of myth, in the sphere of ordinary human activities, the question is "Who has control now?" with the corollary, "Who makes decisions about participation?" In the great majority of myths such questions do not focus specifically on male-female relations in this respect, but in a substantial minority of examples across the continent they do.

In the Djanggawul myth, the sisters lose their monopoly right to ownership and control of secret-sacred materials when these are stolen from them by men. On Cape York Peninsula, two girls find a bull-roarer and swing it, singing that it is forbidden; they place it in a

bloodwood tree, saying "It belongs to us women, really, we have found it! But no matter! We leave it for the men!" (McConnel, 1957, p. 119). In east Kimberley, "some of the female totemic ancestors were given *tjurunga*" by the mythic being Djulargal, but "later these were stolen from them by Porcupine" (Kaberry, 1939, p. 201). In western Arnhem Land, "the *ubar* ritual belonged at first only to women"; Gandagi Kangaroo Man drove the women away, took their sacred emblems, and gathered a group of men to perform the same rites (Berndt and Berndt, 1982, p. 257; 1970, pp. 120–121). The Wawalag brought Kunapipi songs and rites on their journey to the northern Arnhem Land coast, but after being swallowed by the Great Python they taught these, and gave them, to men. An interesting point here is that the Wawalag were swallowed and regurgitated in much the same way as male novices are, symbolically, in initiation rites. But those male novices are recipients of sacred knowledge, whereas the Wawalag were both teachers and donors, and the novices in that episode in their myth were adult men. To compound this issue of "women had it first," many ritual sequences now dominated by men show a preoccupation with the idea, or the ideal, of women, and with female physiological characteristics such as pregnancy and childbirth.

Mythic precedent and substantiation also emphasize the important place of women in the creative era of the Dreaming, even in cases where it is not spelled out. For example, in the Northern Aranda Curlew and Magpie death myth, it was a Curlew woman who first broke through the hard rock to emerge on the earth, followed by other women. Strehlow specifies in other discussions the "majestic" and impressive bearing of mythic women in Aranda myth. Isobel M. White (1974, 1975) has tried, inconclusively, to explain central Australian myths that seem to suggest ritual subordination of women by relating them to similar attitudes and values in everyday living. Others, including Diane Bell (1984), have argued that such interpretations are based on inadequate empirical evidence and that closer scrutiny of both myth and its sociocultural context are needed before any definitive conclusions can be reached. In the past, Aboriginal women's perspectives have rarely been taken into account except at a very superficial level, and in some areas their own secret-sacred rites and myths continue to be unknown to outsiders. That aside, the larger issue of myth interpretation is still controversial and difficult.

Myths from all parts of the continent contain as much bad as good human behavior. The activities of a great many mythic characters do not conform with what was regarded as good behavior by, or for, the people who told and heard their stories. Even in regions where the main deities concentrate on creation in a relatively mild way, such as the Djanggawul (despite their original incest, and the men's theft of sacred paraphernalia), other material dwells on more emotionally rousing events. Among the *wogal dou* are accounts of aggressive encounters, cruelty, and despair. The trickster Pomapoma (Gwingula), for example, in the course of his adventures, rapes and kills his young mother-in-law in a story which at once deplores his reprehensible actions and presents them in quasi-humorous style. In western Arnhem Land, in a more clearly moralizing or threatening vein, Yirawadbad, in his venomous snake form, kills both his young betrothed wife and her mother because the girl consistently rejected him; he is now dangerous to everyone but especially to girls, and he makes his reason explicit as he surveys the two corpses. In his human form, he went on to be one of the main instigators of the important Ubar ritual; this includes ritual enactment of the scene where, as a snake in a hollow log, he bites the hand of each woman in turn.

Relating such materials to their sociocultural context involves more than simply considering how, and how far, one dimension reflects what takes place in the other. "Mythic beings were both good and bad, and badness was a necessary corollary of goodness." It is as if "an immoral act must occur in order to demonstrate what can be regarded as being moral," but myth and story reflect "the total life situation, in which . . . there is both good and bad . . . [as] part of the inevitable and irreversible framework of existence" (R. M. Berndt, 1970, pp. 220, 223, 244).

A crucial issue, particularly in respect to what Strehlow has called the "amoral" behavior of many central Australian mythic figures, is whether sanctions operate to discourage or prevent or deflect such behavior. How far do the myths themselves serve to deflect it, as a kind of catharsis? This is a complex issue because the myths never exist in a sociocultural vacuum.

To compile a dictionary or an index of themes or motifs in traditional Aboriginal mythology would be a formidable undertaking. But it would be only a beginning in the process of understanding and explanation. In virtually all cases, a spoken or written myth must be heard and seen in relation to the unspoken, unwritten information known to the people to whose mythology it belongs, the shared understandings that are essential in learning what it is about. Discussions and comments help to throw light on these assumptions, but they are not enough without a more complete knowledge of the sociocultural and personal contexts. And the nature of the relevant sanctions and rules is a necessary and salient aspect of that context.

Myths do not consitute a mirror image of Aboriginal

societies. They reflect those societies, in their "ought" as well as their "is" dimensions, in a variety of ways, both negative and positive. What the myths in general do reflect is one of the major strengths of Aboriginal religion. It ranges from the mystical and esoteric, the secret aspects of the sacred, the spectacle and exhilaration and drama of ritual events, to the more mundane features of everyday living. There is a place in religion—a significant place—for all of these and for all of the varied roles and circumstances throughout a person's life. The sphere of myth illuminates that place through contrasts and challenges as well as through insistence on continuities.

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CATHERINE H. BERNDT

Modern Movements

In the history of conquest and dispossession of Australian Aborigines, well-defined and well-organized religious movements have not been characteristic. Melanesian-type cargo cults have been conspicuous by their absence, although a cargo-cult element has been reported in a few instances. Nor has Aboriginal Australia produced any notable prophetic figures or millenarian movements. Initially, Aborigines generally responded to

invasion and dispossession of their land with violence, but this resistance eventually proved futile and was followed by a period of quiet adaptation. Only in recent decades has an active political struggle to remedy the injustices of the past arisen. In a theoretical framework of linear evolution, one would have expected an interim period of religious movements whose purpose was to rid the land of intruding aliens or to arrive at a more satisfactory relationship. With a few exceptions, which are described below, such was not the case.

It is true—if not a truism—that the culture of the foraging and seminomadic Aborigines throughout Australia was so vastly different from that of the invaders, and so devastated by superior force, that an effective response to the invasion, aside from short-lived physical resistance in each locale, was unthinkable until a long period of cognitive adjustment had elapsed. Fortunately, sparsely settled areas of the island continent provided circumstances enabling the continuance of Aboriginal traditions during this long period—a continuance which has become the basis of a cultural regeneration adapted to present circumstances. The cataclysmic effect of the invasion on Aboriginal culture does not by itself, however, explain the dearth of well-defined religious movements. It is to the characteristics of Australian Aboriginal religion that attention must be drawn to explain the seeming anomaly.

Traditional Aboriginal Religion. Because of its relative homogeneity throughout the continent, traditional Aboriginal religion can be viewed as a single entity. From place to place and region to region, the complex of mythological figures, specific ritual forms, and ritual emphases vary, but the general outlines of religious ideology and practice remain constant. The Dreaming—a world inhabited by the spiritual ancestors of human and nonhuman life forms alike—is the basis of all Aboriginal religion. It laid down the patterns of the Aboriginal universe for all time. A conservative concept, it is not conducive to rapid adaptation; nevertheless, it is hospitable to changes that fit the elaborate but involuted complex of symbols used by each religious community. The religious duty of all initiated members of the community is to perform faithfully the ceremonies which activate the life-sustaining power of the ancestors. The concept of the Dreaming is decidedly nonmillenarian, nonutopian, and indeed nonhistorical.

Much has been written of the egalitarian nature of Australian Aboriginal society, though some allowances must be made for differences of age and sex. The social organization of traditional religion is hierarchical, gerontocratic, and sexist. Although Aboriginal women have a religious life of their own in most parts of Australia, in general men maintain a marked attitude of su-

periority about their secret rites and exclude women from the inner core of their religious life. Over a number of years male novices pass through several ritual grades, or rites of passage, often marked by painful physical ordeals. Ceremonies are controlled by elders who have acquired ritual experience and knowledge after decades of participation. Although the issue is contentious among anthropologists, religious leadership probably conferred political leadership and economic power in secular life, at least, to some extent; Émile Durkheim's dichotomy between sacred and profane was probably overstated in respect to Australia (Durkheim, 1915).

Aboriginal ceremonies have been categorized as local totemic rites and transcendental rites (Maddock, 1972, pp. 117ff.). Performances of local rites are the prerogative of local clan members and are oriented to the interests of the clan and its territories. Transcendental rites embrace several clans and sometimes several language communities; they are concerned more with rites of passage and with interclan and intertribal interests. Thus transcendental rites often occurred across a whole region and sometimes "traveled" hundreds of miles; these "traveling cults" have been traced and documented in historical times. We do not know to what extent traveling cults were stimulated by European settlement and perhaps constitute adaptive religious movments; there seems little doubt that in historical times these cults have served to forge political alliances between Aboriginal groups that might otherwise have been hostile toward each other. Despite the presence of extralocal cults, traditional Aboriginal religion was parochial in orientation, and traveling cults were exchanged between neighboring groups.

The Context of Change. Aboriginal religious structures—developed over millennia on an island continent with little alien contact except along the north coast—were initially incapable of absorbing the onslaught of European culture. Traditions, which were adapted to slow change and in which continuity was valued above all else, either disappeared quickly in regions of intense colonization or persisted, although increasingly dissociated from social realities. Aboriginal cosmology encoded in the concept of the Dreaming was unable to account for cataclysmic changes. Seduced by the material rewards and relative freedom of European employment, young men became estranged from the authority of religious elders. The religious status of men was undermined by their observable inferiority in situations of paternalism at best and outright racism at worst. Parochial concerns of local traditions were of little relevance to the mixture of clans and language communities gathered on reserve lands set aside by governments. In many areas of Australia, Aboriginal religion failed to cope with the changed situation: the young rebelled, others were disillusioned, leaders were demoralized.

In areas of Australia more remote from the gathering momentum of colonization, persisting religious traditions were granted the opportunity to adapt by the historical and geographical circumstances. The bearers of these traditions were subject to similar pressures as their less fortunate coreligionists elsewhere, but the pressures were more extended over time. What appear at this time to be viable adaptations, discussed below, have been contingent on several factors: non-Aboriginal Australians' improved tolerance of the continuation of Aboriginal culture, a developing Aboriginal consciousness of common identity and interests, and enhanced Aboriginal mobility and communication through the adoption of modern technology.

Syncretic Movements. Christian missionaries followed hard on the heels of settlers and in some cases ventured beyond the frontiers of pastoral settlement. The results were mixed and sometimes unexpected. At the remote Aboriginal community of Jigalong in the Western Desert (Western Australia), rejection of Christianity, at least in the early stages of missionary expansion, was almost complete (Tonkinson, 1974). At Aurukun on Cape York Peninsula in the far northeast, a mixture of local Aboriginal religion and nearby Torres Strait Islands traditions coexist with Christianity in the same ceremonies (as documented in Judith McDougal's film *The House Opening*, 1980). In more densely settled regions, orthodox Christianity filled the vacuum left by the Aboriginal traditions that were totally unable to adapt. In at least two places in Australia, however, creative attempts at syncretism occurred.

Bandjalang-speakers in northeastern New South Wales were missionized by the interdenominational United Aboriginal Mission (UAM). Preaching a fundamentalist version of Christianity, the UAM believed and taught that traditional spirits and mythic figures were not illusory but were evil manifestations of the devil. Traditional beliefs lingered on, despite their incompatibility with social realities: the breakdown of clan organization, the "liberation" of youths, the undermining of the status of male elders, and general anomie. An Aboriginal non-Bandjalang Pentecostal preacher found fertile ground in this demoralized community. Spirit possession, characteristic of Pentecostalism, was individualized in conformity with Aboriginal custom; elements of local Aboriginal myths were incorporated into the Pentecostal belief system and Christian mythology reinterpreted; degrees of initiation (beginning with baptism) were emphasized and elaborated; and various taboos were adopted. The Bandjalang version of

Pentecostalism was decidedly anti-European: Europeans were equated with Romans who killed Christ (who was humble and poor like the Bandjalang, who would be rewarded when Christ returned in glory). There was little or no contact with European Pentecostal groups. Bandjalang Pentecostalism provided an outlet for grievances against the Aborigines' oppressors and a means of restoring self-respect as well as satisfying religious experience and belief in keeping with both Aboriginal and Christian pasts (Calley, 1964).

On Elcho Island, off the central-north coast of Australia (northeast Arnhem Land), a syncretic movement developed in the late 1950s (Berndt, 1962). Sacred-secret objects *(rangga)* were publicly displayed, and spiritual ancestors were equated with prophets within the Christian belief system. The Methodist mission on Elcho Island had refrained from denigrating Aboriginal religion, and the leadership of the movement had strong links with both the church and traditional religion. Occupying a remote corner of a large reserve, the Elcho islanders were sheltered from the worst effects of colonization, and the movement, although it was an attempt to stem the drift toward assimilation by offering a compromise, was not overtly anti-European. Its aims were pragmatic: to retain control over Aboriginal affairs, to obtain better educational and employment opportunities, and to unite hitherto parochially oriented Aboriginal groups of eastern Arnhem Land, and perhaps beyond, by publicly sharing religious secrets. The means, however, were based on the false assumption that what eastern Arnhem Landers valued most highly among their possessions, the *rangga*, were also valued highly by Europeans. The movement failed on several counts. Although, as a sign of the new order, women were shown the *rangga* for the first time, they were not told the meanings, which every male novice has revealed to him. Other eastern Arnhem Landers did not follow suit. Worst of all, European government administrators and missionaries were unimpressed.

The continuing secularization of traditional religion and increasing adoption of materialistic values by the Elcho islanders may have relegated the initial movement to an isolated episode in the progress toward the final abandonment of religion as a unifying force were it not for the embracing of fundamentalist evangelical Christianity by the controlling majority of islanders in the late 1970s. The fundamentalist movement has spread rapidly across eastern and central Arnhem Land. The features of the movement are not clear at present, but it appears to be another offer of compromise. The religious belief system is more purely Christian, but ritual forms are more akin to Aboriginal than to European traditions. In the context of renewed threats to the in-

violability of the Arnhem Land Reserve from government and mining companies, the adherents preach the equality of Aborigines and Europeans, which may convey an appeal—consciously or unconsciously—for Aboriginal control over land and society. Although the movement has had considerable success, adherence to it is by no means universal. A more direct threat to traditional religion than the earlier movement, it has set father against son and traditionalists against Christians. The movement does not appear to be anti-European nor is it characterized by the extreme religious separateness of Bandjalang Pentecostalism, but there is perhaps potential in these directions.

Western Desert Movements. The cultural block traditionally occupying the huge desert region of eastern Western Australia and western areas of the Northern Territory and South Australia was the area most isolated from Western encroachment. Mainly since the 1930s and particularly since World War II, Aborigines of the Western Desert have moved into government settlements and into the pastoral regions of the southern Kimberley Plateau of northwestern Australia. Here Aborigines have been most successful at adapting their traditional religion to the exigencies of European domination.

Since the late 1930s transcendental cults have overtaken local traditions in this region (Lommel, 1950–1951). One such cult, Kurangara, occasionally blended elements of European culture with traditional religion. Once widespread, the cult now seems defunct. It was part of a larger cult complex which included **Kalwadi, Kajirri,** and **Kunapipi,** with their extensions northward from central Australia into Arnhem Land (Berndt, 1950–1951). These cults apparently developed from earlier cults (Meggitt, 1966; Stanner, 1966). Their intensification and increased frequency of appearance in the Western Desert in recent decades perhaps warrant their treatment as religious movements singularly and as a total movement collectively (Kolig, 1973–1974, 1981).

The southern Kimberley Plateau, where Western Desert Aborigines from farther south have significantly intruded, is the focus of this movement. Cults here are exchanged across hundreds of miles. An important impetus seems to have been the Pastoral Award in 1969, which granted Aboriginal employees equal pay on cattle properties in the region but was followed by mass expulsion of Aborigines from land on which they had come to feel secure. The expulsion coincided with a rise in Aboriginal political consciousness and a growing sense of common interests. The cultic movement is intimately linked with demands for Aboriginal title to land.

In the southern Kimberley and in many other places

in the Western Desert, the clan and its rights to land and associated ritual privileges are increasingly anachronistic. They have been replaced by residential membership of Aboriginal communities of mixed local origins and rights acquired through cult initiation. A conflict exists between Christians and cultists on the issues of symbolic identity and appropriate role in the wider Australian community. The cultists have adapted traditional religion to meet the demands of youth and women's emancipation, pan-Aboriginal identity, and economic development: initiation ordeals have been considerably reduced, women are admitted into cults on a more equal footing, religious parochialism has been transcended by incorporating ritual elements from various locales, political and religious leadership have separated but remain collaborative, and the ritual calendar is adjusted to the requirements of economic enterprise. Some or all of these elements are accepted in various Western Desert Aboriginal communities, as their members participate in the cult exchanges emanating mainly from the southern Kimberley.

A Community Case Study. Established as a government Aboriginal settlement in about 1950, Lajamanu, formerly Hooker Creek, is a predominantly Walbiri (Warlpiri) community in the central northwest of the Northern Territory. Traditional clan territories of most Lajamanu residents are located to the south in the Tanami Desert, but many clan members have never seen their territory, and few have ever lived there. After the establishment of the settlement, local totemic ceremonies declined in importance, and until the early 1970s the Kajirri complex assumed increasing significance. Traditional inititation was practiced assiduously until about the same time, when youthful novices became increasingly restive. The local Baptist mission gradually acquired converts, and by the mid-1970s, as traditional religion became increasingly anachronistic, the Christian future at Lajamanu looked bright. Local Christians experimented with adaptations of Walbiri ritual forms to Christian content and earned themselves mission-sponsored trips to southern cities to display their minimally syncretic creations.

From about 1976 onward, a new cult from the southern Kimberley was enthusiastically embraced at Lajamanu. The adoption was managed by relatively youthful Aboriginal administrators who were articulate in English, skilled in negotiations with Europeans, politically aware, and in control of the community's telecommunications and motorized transportation facilities. Exchange visits of large contingents were arranged with Aboriginal communities far to the west across the Western Australian border. (Apparently, a complex of Walbiri rituals, called Woagaia in the Kimberley, had been

adopted by western communities some years earlier.) Far more dramatic and less stylized than Walbiri ritual forms, the ritual forms of the newly arrived cult were well-suited to performance by younger people. Women were admitted to the cult in a seemingly more equal role than in traditional rites, and ritual experience of male elders was set at nought.

The aim of cult leaders at Lajamanu—to replace the old ceremonies with the new—was met with some resistance. To avoid initiation into the new cult, Walbiri Christians gathered in the mission yard; other people fled to distant places. The European missionary bemoaned the passing of traditional rites. Old men insisted on their sons being initiated traditionally. Youths were more interested in participating in the universal youth culture of rock and roll and in the country-and-western traditions of rural Australia. Of the several cultural identities thus available to the Lajamanu community, only the new cult from the Kimberley seemed to generate great excitement and strong reaction. Whether the new cult succeeds, however, will depend on the extent to which the Lajamanu Walbiri choose to adopt a religious movement which currently seems to offer the best chance of maintaining an Aboriginal identity which is in harmony with the aims of an emerging national Aboriginal polity.

Lajamanu is a newcomer to the religious movement of the Western Desert. Located directly west of the southern Kimberley corridor of the movment, Lajamanu represents an extension of the movement's axis. Political and religious leadership have remained wedded in the initial stages, and coercion is used to gain adherents. If the new cult does take hold and the community enters more fully into cult exchanges with their new allies, these traditional elements may be modified or disappear. Since there are historical precedents for cult exchanges to the north and northeast of Walbiri country, Lajamanu may become a pivot for a more widespread Aboriginal religious movement.

Conclusion. Traditional Aboriginal religious parochialism has inhibited the emergence of a pan-Aboriginal religious movement. The few previous religious movements have had only local appeal. While the Western Desert movement builds on traditional characteristics of Aboriginal religion, it has ameliorated those aspects which are inappropriate to modern conditions and unacceptable to people who have other alternatives. Christianity, including Aboriginal versions of it which may constitute religious movements in themselves, is the main rival of revitalized and adapted Aboriginal traditions. Perhaps because they are too different, there have been few attempts at syncretism of Christianity and Aboriginal religion. With the exception

of Bandjalang, an anti-European element has not been conspicuous in postcontact Aboriginal religion, not because Australian Aborigines have benignly accommodated European settlement, but because it seems the main features of traditional religion are unsuited. In those regions where Aboriginal religion has retained some vitality, a basis exists for the maintenance and development of an Aboriginal identity in which religion is an important element. In at least one large region, the Western Desert, this element has some features of a religious movement. Modern transport and communications, as well as a successful outcome of the current political struggle for recognition of Aboriginal title to land in regions of significant Aboriginal population, may stimulate the further development of an adapted, revitalized, and loosely integrated network of Aboriginal religious traditions, leading toward what may come to be regarded as a national Aboriginal religious movement.

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History of Study

The study of Australian Aboriginal religions has been the study of religions without a written record provided by their adherents. We depend on what outsiders to Ab-

original religion have thought worthwhile to commit to writing. Moreover the history of contact in Australia has been a sorry one in the main—Aborigines were dispossessed of land, regarded with contempt, and made socially and politically inferior. The amateur anthropologist A. W. Howitt could observe in 1880 that the frontier was often marked by a line of blood. Indeed, between the late eighteenth century, when European settlement began, and the 1920s, Aboriginal numbers fell so sharply that prophecies of race extinction were neither alarmist by some nor wishful thinking by others. After World War II, in keeping with a new policy of assimilating Aborigines to an ill-defined general Australian standard, there was a great expansion of administrative interference with them. But a more sympathetic attitude toward tradition became prevalent during the 1970s; "self-management" and "self-determination" entered common usage as policy slogans; and a few Aborigines even began to call for sovereignty. In what is now a highly politicized atmosphere, with laws passed or proposed for the grant of land rights, the protection of sacred sites, and the recognition of customary law, it can be an advantage for Aborigines to be—or to appear to be—traditional in outlook and values. It is amid such aftermaths and in such contexts that scholars (mostly anthropologists) have studied Aboriginal religion.

In the course of this strained and unhappy history a remarkable change has occurred in the appreciation of Aboriginal religion. It can best be illustrated by juxtaposing two pairs of quotations. In 1828 Roger Oldfield (pseudonym of the Reverend Ralph Mansfield) wrote that "the religion of the Aborigines, or rather their superstition, is very absurd," and in 1841 another clergyman, Lancelot Edward Threlkeld, described Aborigines as "deluded men" who, "like most ignorant savage tribes, are remarkably superstitious." But by the mid-twentieth century, a number of writers had discussed the status of Aboriginal religion more sympathetically. In 1965, the anthropologist W. E. H. Stanner referred to "the facts that have convinced modern anthropologists that the Aborigines are a deeply religious people."

Such a rise in estimation reflects growing knowledge of and deepening sympathy with Aborigines, but another important cause is the loss of confidence in the validity or usefulness of earlier criteria for distinguishing true religion from false, or religion from superstition and magic. Assertions of Aboriginal religiosity (or spirituality, as it is often called) and studies of aspects of Aboriginal religion have proliferated since the 1950s—coinciding, ironically, with a growing inclusion of Aborigines in the Australian polity and an increasing erosion of the more tangible features of traditional culture. No longer as objectively "other" as they once were,

the Aborigines have become subjectively "other" through being credited with a religious dimension largely absent from the secularized society which engulfs them. It would be wrong, however, to imagine that an unbridgeable gulf has opened between earlier and later bodies of opinion. A degree of continuity can be seen even in the writings of Stanner, who worked passionately and to great effect to dispel misperceptions of Aboriginal life and thought.

The Aborigines, he wrote in 1953, have no gods, their afterlife is only a shadowy replica of worldly existence, their ethical insights are dim and coarsely textured, their concept of goodness lacks true scruple, and their many stories about the Dreaming (the far-off creative period when nature and culture were formed) are plainly preposterous, lacking logic, system, and completeness. Does this differ much from Howitt, half a century earlier, who could not see that the Aborigines had any form of religion, and who thought that the supernatural beings in whom they believed showed no trace of a divine nature (being, at most, ideal headmen living in the sky instead of on earth)? Does it differ from Howitt's contemporaries, Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen, in whose monumental works such words as *god*, *religion*, and *divinity* are conspicuous by their absence, though they saw a religious aspect in the Intichiuma, or totemic increase ceremonies, of central Australia? Yet Stanner insisted not only that Aborigines had made the longest and most difficult move toward the formation of a truly religious outlook, but that they had gone far beyond that first step.

Some of the observed particulars and some of the conclusions drawn from them are much the same as those from the turn of the century. But a good deal of the old theoretical baggage—concern with the order of appearance of magic, religion, and science, for example—has gone overboard in the course of extensive remodeling of our frameworks of perception and interpretation. That Aborigines lack certain features of the religions best known to Europeans no longer seems important. Thus the heat has left the debate over whether Baiame, Daramulun, and other such All-Fathers were supernaturalized headmen, Christian borrowings, or genuine high gods (as maintained, for example, by Spencer's contemporary, the Lutheran missionary and amateur anthropologist Carl Strehlow, regarding the Aranda of central Australia)—indeed, it is doubtful that one can still speak of a debate on this arcane topic. What does seem important is to see the world and humankind in Aboriginal terms, though it be through a glass darkly.

This new imperative has required a considerable broadening in interpretative framework. There would be general agreement with Stanner that a study may be *about* religion but will not be *of* it if any of the four categories of experience, belief, action, and purpose is neglected. Aboriginal religion, he argued, draws on a human experience of life and a creative purpose in life, and the study of it cannot, as so often thought, be equated with study of the beliefs and actions (myths and rites) of its adherents. But a deeper insight is also needed. Stanner saw myths, rites, and the images of art as "languages of the mind," beyond which one must go to reach the "metaphysic of life" by which they are cryptically invested. Few would disagree with him that anthropology has so far failed in this last and most ambitious task. There is, indeed, much still to be done in mapping the languages of the mind and in working out their interplay with one another, with the social organization of the people, and with the landscape in which Aboriginal lives are set.

Religion's Luxuriant Growth. Stanner suggested in 1965 that one of the best avenues of study of Aboriginal religion was through the surviving regional cults. In fact, anthropological attention has long tended to focus on them, as can be seen by the studies that Howitt and Robert Hamilton Mathews (1841–1918) made of the Bora, or initiation, ceremonies in southeast Australia and that Spencer and Gillen made of the increase and initiation ceremonies of central Australia. This tradition, as it can justly be regarded, has continued until the most recent times. Some of the more notable examples are Ronald M. Berndt's monographs on the Kunapipi and Djanggawul of northern Australia, A. P. Elkin's papers on the Maraian and Yabuduruwa, also of the north, and M. J. Meggitt's monograph on the Gadjeri of central Australia, though there has also been valuable work of a more general nature, such as Catherine H. Berndt's and Diane Bell's studies of women's religious beliefs and observances.

The popularity of the cult for study stems from the fact that it is in many ways a natural whole—it seems to be self-bounding. Commonly it has a name (Kunapipi or Kuringal, for example), includes a sequence of ritual episodes—the performance of which may stretch over several weeks—and usually one or more cycles of songs, and has attached to it a body of myths and tangible symbols, such as a musical instrument—gong or bullroarer, for example—which may stand for a mythical founder of the cult and be known by the same name as the cult. An outsider who attends a performance may well be reminded of European plays, operas, or ballets, though it would be wrong to think of a cult as necessarily an enactment of a straightforward story. Some episodes do have a narrative quality, but others can be quite cryptic, and the sequence as a whole is likely to

have a variety of stories and significations woven through it. Rather similarly, the songs that make up the accompanying cycle or cycles may be easily translatable, translatable only in fragments, or altogether devoid of any meaning known to the performers. The performers themselves are not self-chosen or selected at random but occupy roles prescribed according to such criteria as sex, degree of initiatory advancement, moiety (where, as is usual, a dual organization exists), totemic identity, or localized group. All of these criteria, and perhaps others as well, can be relevant in the course of a single cult performance. Another typical aspect of a cult is its anchorage in the landscape: myths and songs refer to numerous places, rites are symbolically or actually performed at such places, and the groups and categories of the social order in terms of which the performers are chosen stand in a variety of jurisprudential relations to those places. A cult, then, is virtually a microcosm of Aboriginal culture.

Although a performance can be seen as a many-sided symbolic display, it also achieves certain institutionalized purposes. The Bora ceremonies of the southeast were especially concerned with the advancement of boys to manhood. They included spectacular episodes in which novices were first separated from, and later returned to, mundane life (often personified by their mothers); in the intervening period they suffered a visible mark of advancement in the loss of a tooth through evulsion. In other regions circumcision or subincision might be substituted for or added to tooth evulsion as the preeminent physical sign of manhood.

Throughout much of central and western Australia the maintenance or promotion of fertility in plant and animal nature was aimed at in cult performances. Disposal of the remains of the dead can be an important purpose, as can transformation of spirits of the dead into a state in which they can return to ancestral waters (or other places) and from which they can (in some regions) be reincarnated. Several such purposes can be achieved in a single cult performance. We should not, that is to say, think of there necessarily being a one-to-one correlation of cult and institutionalized purpose. Nor should we think of express purposes as the motives for cult performances. As musical, dramatic, and aesthetic occasions, as mappings-out of landscape and social organization, they can be deeply satisfying for their own sake. This has been brought out especially in the writings of Stanner on the Murinbata of northern Australia, and of T. G. H. Strehlow (1908–1978), the linguist-anthropologist son of Carl Strehlow, on the Aranda.

In spite of seeming to be the natural unit of study, no cult has yet been the subject of a truly comprehensive published work. Howitt and Mathews, for example, concentrated on the sequence of ritual episodes, with the latter also providing detailed descriptions of the shape and dimensions of ceremonial grounds, of the paths between them, and of the objects of art by which they were surrounded. Berndt's Kunapipi monograph runs to 223 pages and his Djanggawul monograph to 320, but both are stronger on myth and song than on ritual description. Elkin on the Maraian, like Meggitt on the Gadjeri and Stanner on the cults performed by the Murinbata, neglects the songs (the Yabuduruwa lacks singing). None of these scholars shows, in a really detailed way, how the cults are anchored in landscape and social organization, though all of them are aware of it. In short, even at a purely descriptive level, each of our accounts suffers pronounced weaknesses as well as showing characteristic strengths. It is as though the student of a cult is defeated by the sheer abundance of what it offers to eye, ear, and mind. But even if we had a truly comprehensive account of, say, the Kunapipi or Yabuduruwa, we would still be far removed from an adequate grasp of the religious life of the area concerned, for usually several cults coexist.

In southern Arnhem Land, for example, where religious studies have been made by myself, following on earlier work by Elkin, five cults were extant in the 1960s and 1970s, with others still remembered by some older people. The five, in order of degree of secrecy or importance, were Bugabud, Lorgon, Kunapipi and Yabuduruwa (this pair being ranked about equally), and Maraian. All men and women could expect to take part in each of them—they were not the concern, then, of specialized and mutually exclusive groups of votaries. The dual organization, divided into patrilineal moieties named Dua and Yiridja, imposed its pattern on the set of cults: Bugabud, Lorgon, and Maraian existed in two versions, one for each moiety; Kunapipi was classified as Dua and Yabuduruwa as Yiridja. But in each case performers would necessarily be drawn from both moieties by virtue of a prescribed division of labor and responsibilities.

The acquisition of competence in these cults is part of the protracted process by which individuals rise to full adulthood. However, they also discharge purposes connected with the dead. Bugabud and Lorgon are mortuary cults, in the sense that they are concerned with the bones of a dead person—rites of secondary disposal, as defined early this century by the French comparativist Robert Hertz. Kunapipi, Yabuduruwa, and Maraian are postmortuary in the sense that, the mortal remains having been finally dealt with, they are concerned with transforming the spirit of the dead person into a state in which it may enter its clan waters and later be re-

born. How many rites are held for a man—or whether any at all are held—depends on such variables as his standing while alive, and the energy, interest, and degree of influence of his survivors. In addition, mortuary observances can be blocked altogether when, as has become usual, people die in hospitals and are buried in municipal graveyards.

To write an adequate description of such a set of cults would be a mammoth undertaking. But to think of portraying the religious life of southern Arnhem Land by describing discrete cults would be to remain in the condition of theoretical backwardness remarked upon by Kenelm Burridge in 1973. What marks recent advances in the study of religion, he argued, is the transformation of functionalism into some kind of structuralism, by which he meant the abandonment of the concrete institution in favor of the search for the elements of a total semantic field. Institutions would be seen as particular constellations of these elements, and the value of an element would be determined by its position in a constellation. Something like this view is now fairly widely held, and two anthropologists have published substantial approximations of it. Stanner is one, with his perceptive and influential analyses of Murinbata religion. The other is William Lloyd Warner, whose classic study, *A Black Civilization* (New York, 1937), includes a valiant attempt to demonstrate pervasive and recurring themes and symbols in the myths and rites of the Murngin of northern Arnhem Land.

Two examples from southern Arnhem Land may show the importance of being willing to cut across the boundaries of discrete cults. One concerns the spirits of the dead, which are transformed by the performance of postmortuary cults. In their transformed state, they are colored as the rainbow. So were the waters which covered the earth when time began. The transformed spirits can be called by the same name as is used for real rainbows, and this is also the name for certain beings of prodigious power who existed in the Dreaming and may still exist, for example, the well-known Rainbow Snake, here conceived to be plural. Moreover the animal-like beings who acted creatively in the Dreaming and who, in many instances, are ritually celebrated in the cults may be described thusly in order to distinguish them from everyday animals who take the same form but lack marvelous powers. In studying such a pattern of thought and imagery we come to grips with Stanner's "metaphysic of life."

The second example concerns the systematic relation of complementary opposition in design plan between Kunapipi and Yabuduruwa, cults of equal rank but of opposite moiety. Thus one is performed largely by night and the other mostly by day. One is strongly curvilinear

in its imagery; the other has a rectilinear emphasis. One is full of singing and is noisy and joyous; the other lacks songs altogether. There are other contrasts as well. The point is that although each cult can, in a sense, be treated as an organized whole, there is another sense in which they are halves of a divided universe, just as the moieties are halves of a divided society. Much in the literature suggests that such contrasts in design plan are common in Aboriginal religious complexes; there may well be equally fascinating patterns of opposition and permutation between cults at different levels of a hierarchy.

It is also clear from the literature that important work can be done in tracing chains of connection between the religious complexes of different areas. Some of the early writers were aware of this possibility— Howitt, for example, in distinguishing eastern and western types of initiation, was recognizing far-flung patterns of similarity and difference—and it has been explored by later writers, including Elkin, Berndt, and Meggitt. The most ambitious effort has come from Worms, who made continent-wide studies of religious vocabulary and also sought to enumerate the "essentials" of Aboriginal religion and to distinguish them from "accidental accretions."

Main Phases of Study. It may seem artificial to distinguish periods in the study of Aboriginal religion, as distinct from recognizing certain enduring problems posed by the material, yet all but a few of the scholars likely to be taken seriously today belong to one of three main groupings. To a great extent the ways in which they have worked their data have been conditioned, if not determined, by fashions and theories of overseas origin—Stanner, Worms, and the younger Strehlow would be notable exceptions.

A first phase, spanning the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, is dominated by the names of Howitt, Spencer and Gillen, Mathews, and the elder Strehlow. Except for Strehlow, who concentrated his researches on the Aranda and their Loritja neighbors, these scholars amassed information over very great areas indeed, although Howitt's work mainly concerned the southeast of the continent and Spencer and Gillen's the Northern Territory. Some of the descriptions of ritual dating from this period, which of course preceded the rise of professional anthropology, are as thorough and detailed as any that have been written since, if not a good deal more so. (It should be noted that the elder Strehlow felt constrained as a missionary not to attend cult performances, so his knowledge of ritual was hearsay, but in studying myths and songs he reaped the benefits of long acquaintance with his informants and of a thorough grasp of their language.) An indication of the

quantity of data collected by the workers of this phase is given by Spencer and Gillen's first book, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (London, 1899). It has eight chapters, totaling 338 pages, on totems, ceremonies, and the like, with some material in other chapters also being relevant to what we would call religion.

A second phase, beginning in the mid-1920s and flowering especially during the 1930s, the first decade of the journal *Oceania*, owed much to the initial impetus given by A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, Australia's first professor of anthropology. Those years saw the advent of professional anthropology, inspired by functionalist ideas and committed to intensive fieldwork in relatively small areas. Yet the harvest of religious data was meager in comparison with what had been collected in the preceding phase. Before World War II the most substantial portrayal of religious life to emerge from the new wave of scholars was Warner's study of the Murngin, but the chapters of *A Black Civilization* devoted to the subject run to barely two hundred pages (including a good deal of interpretation)—fewer than Berndt would later devote to the Kunapipi alone. The strong point of the writers of this period was their sense of the interconnectedness of the institutions that go to make up a culture, and besides Warner a number of them made useful, albeit somewhat limited, contributions to our religious knowledge. Donald F. Thomson, Ralph Piddington, Ursula H. McConnel, and Phyllis M. Kaberry may particularly be mentioned. Except for Warner they have since been greatly overshadowed by Elkin, Stanner, and the younger Strehlow—scholars who were active in research before World War II, but published their best work on religion long after it, thus overlapping the third phase, which indeed they did much to stimulate.

The third phase really got under way with the expansion of anthropology departments in the universities and the foundation of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies in the 1960s. Intellectually it owes a special debt to papers published by Stanner between 1959 and 1967. Stanner's writings, the product of intensive ratiocination and prolonged reflection, best fit his own prescription for study of, and not merely about, religion. But much that he has to say is difficult, if not positively cryptic, and is best tackled by readers who already enjoy a familiarity with Aboriginal thought and ritual. The store of personally gathered field data on which he relies is far less plentiful than that amassed by Ronald M. Berndt and Catherine H. Berndt or by the younger Strehlow, writers whose work has exerted less influence on their fellows.

The third phase is less clearly distinguishable from the second than the second from the first. The greater degree of continuity is partly due to the shared empha-

sis on intensive fieldwork by professional anthropologists, as well as to the survival into the 1970s of scholars who had already begun to make their mark forty years earlier and to the appearance of a few students of religion (notably the two Berndts and Meggitt, all trained by Elkin) during the intervening period. Apart from a vast increase in the number of persons doing research, the main differences between the two phases consist in an abandonment of old-style functionalism, a rise of approaches influenced in varying degree by forms of structural or symbolic anthropology, and an intense interest in the significance of the landscape in which Aboriginal lives are set. There is still little sign of philosophers or students of comparative religion challenging the ascendancy of anthropologists.

[*See also the biography of Howitt.*]

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The best general exposition of Aboriginal religion is Mircea Eliade's *Australian Religions: An Introduction* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1973), which is based on specialized studies and theoretical arguments published before 1965. Another useful account taking an Australia-wide view is the contribution by Worms, with an updating by Petri, in Hans Nevermann, Ernest A. Worms, and Helmut Petri's *Die Religionen der Südsee und Australiens* (Stuttgart, 1968). A comprehensive selection of readings from anthropologists with field experience among Aborigines is *Religion in Aboriginal Australia*, edited by Max Charlesworth, Howard Morphy, Diane Bell, and me (Saint Lucia, Queensland, 1984). The wealth of detail to be found in particular cults is shown by Ronald M. Berndt in his *Kunapipi* (Melbourne, 1951) and *Djanggawul* (London, 1952) but is most superbly demonstrated in T. G. H. Strehlow, *Songs of Central Australia* (Sydney, 1971), which includes texts and translations of a great many songs. Classic older accounts of Aboriginal religion are in A. W. Howitt's *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia* (New York, 1904), and Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen's *The Northern Tribes of Central Australia* (London, 1904). Two recent studies on topical themes are Erich Kolig's *The Silent Revolution* (Philadelphia, 1981), a study of change and modernization in Aboriginal religion, and Diane Bell's *Daughters of the Dreaming* (Melbourne, 1983), which is concerned with the religious roles of women. *Australian Aboriginal Mythology*, edited by L. R. Hiatt (Canberra, 1975), is a good example of the approaches of some of the younger workers in the field; see also *The Rainbow Serpent*, edited by Ira R. Buchler and me (The Hague, 1978), which contains studies of one of the most widespread Aboriginal symbols. The classic theoretical analysis remains Émile Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1915; reprint, New York, 1965), but it relies on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century research and opinion. The most penetrating modern vision and analysis are from W. E. H. Stanner, whose *On Aboriginal Religion* (Sydney, 1964) and *White Man Got No Dreaming: Essays 1938–1973* (Canberra, 1979) are essential.

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